



Chargeable Garen Waste Consultation Proposal

Report by Consultation & Engagement Team

November 2024

1. Background and methodology

Between 7th October and 4th November 2024, Bolton Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents and stakeholders that have a garden, in sharing their reflections on a proposal for a chargeable garden waste removal service. This proposal would support Environmental Services in contributing £1million of savings in 2025/26. Whilst legislation does not allow local authorities to charge for emptying other household bins, including food waste, the consultation outlined how charges could be introduced for the removal of garden waste.

During the consultation period a comprehensive communication plan was implemented to raise awareness of the proposal across the borough, with a strong emphasis on engaging residents. Communications were distributed for cascade via main news outlets, Council Members and partners. Posters (refer to Appendix C) and paper surveys were also distributed to all 10 libraries across the borough, Bolton Town Hall – One Stop Shop and Farnworth Town Hall. In addition, communications were distributed to Community Alliances, Community Champions and Digital Champions to support the reach of the consultation at the heart of our communities.

Supporting documentation was made accessible on the Council's consultation webpages and social media was heavily utilised throughout the period to share key messages about the consultation. To support residents, the Place Directorate, supported by the Executive Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environmental Services, provided a detailed Frequently Asked Questions guide (refer to Appendix A)

Participants were surveyed using a questionnaire tool made up of open and closed questions, over a period of 4 weeks, providing respondents the opportunity to reflect and share their thoughts on the proposal. The questionnaire was made available both digitally and offline, with the questionnaire being accessible on the council's consultation web page, as well as in hard copy format, on request.

*A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this document, located in Appendix B.

Analysis notes

- All questions were optional.
- Results are presented in the questionnaire format with 'Don't know' type responses removed unless stated.
- Comments have been categorised where feasible. Unless otherwise stated, categories with 50 or more responses are shown. Categories may overlap and a comment from one respondent may be included in multiple categories. A sample of comments [verbatim] are included in the report. Comments may be abbreviated so that only the relevant extract is included. One comment may be coded into multiple categories, and each category may only cover a certain aspect of the comment, for example a respondent may have made both positive and negative comments about the same aspect.
- Base: unless otherwise stated the base is the number of respondents to a particular question.

2. Consultation responses

A number of open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to give respondents the opportunity to comment on the proposal, suggest alternative approaches to chargeable garden waste, outline the support needed if the proposal was approved and detail any concerns.

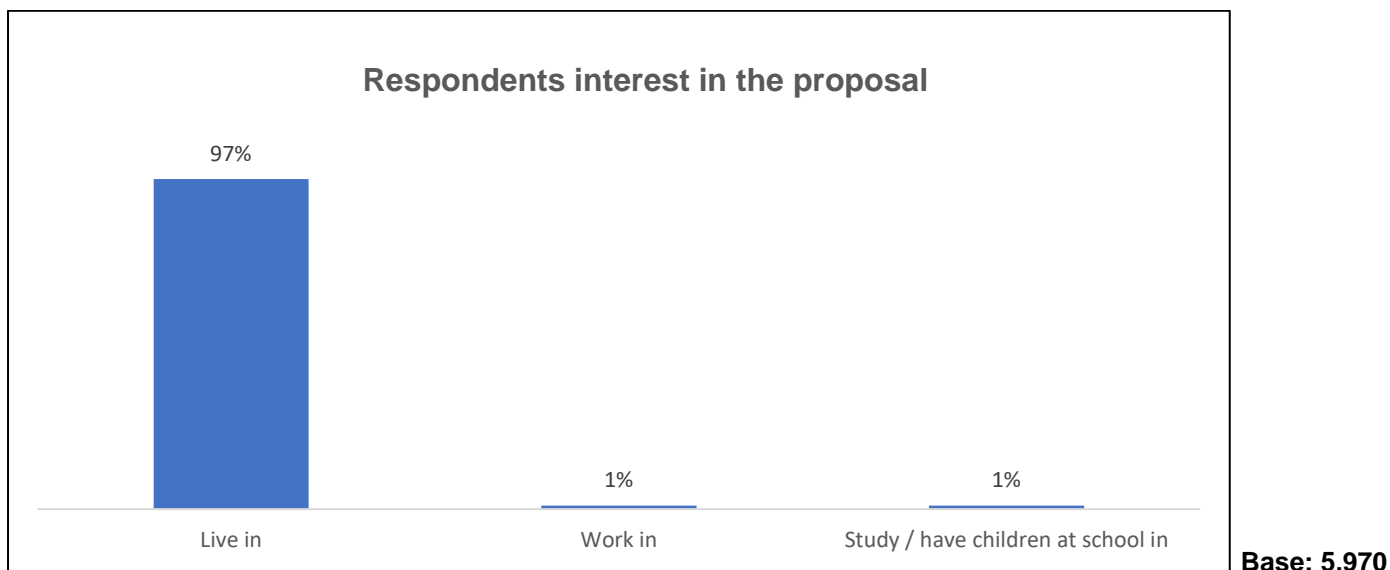
Throughout the consultation period the following responses were received:

- 12,860 completed electronic questionnaires received from residents and stakeholders.
- 18 completed paper questionnaires.
- 7,744 direct comments across the consultation, all of which have been analysed and categorised.

Out of the 12,878 consultation responses received, 5,970 stakeholders outlined their interest in the proposal, with 97% reporting to live in the borough, 1% commute to work in the borough and 1% study or have children at school in the borough. 9 respondents reported in an official capacity, either as an elected council member or official representative from a business or charity. 26 respondents stated they were responding in another capacity, this includes owners of properties in Bolton; stakeholders that grew up in the town or who have relatives that live in Bolton; as well as residents of Bolton who outlined their frustration of a declining town, *“Born in Bolton, worked in Bolton. Live in Bolton. Watched the town depreciate over the years. I’m not impressed”*.

Postcodes were also provided by 5,308 respondents (see demographics section below). Of the responses received, 5,289 (99%) of these stakeholders are resident in the borough and 19 stakeholders are from out of borough, mainly living in Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

Note: These questions are optional. Engagement in other questions evidence that stakeholders responding to the consultation are primarily based within the borough.



3. Initial Views

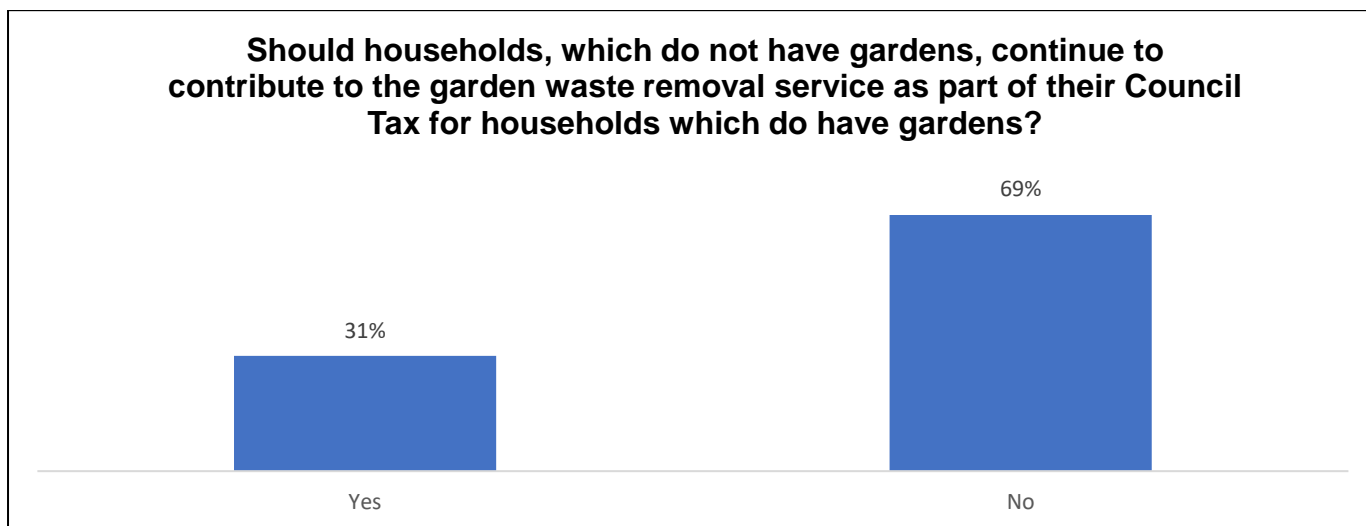
The Executive Cabinet and Environmental Services Directorate were keen to engage residents and stakeholders in sharing their initial views on the services they receive. The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 are clear that collecting garden waste is not a legal requirement for a local authority, unlike household waste and food waste. The legislation is also clear, that a local authority can choose to charge for the collection of garden waste, should it choose to do so.

To bridge the funding gap and to protect frontline services from further cuts, a review of how the funds, (which are in part generated from Council Tax payments), are spent is necessary.

Generating income to address the funding gap and protect the existing frontline services was the focus of this consultation exercise. The following questions, around households without gardens contributing to the collection of garden waste, looked to focus people's attention of the services they receive, for the Council Tax they pay.

3a. Households without gardens

Residents and stakeholders were asked to consider whether households, which do not have gardens, should continue to contribute to the garden waste removal service as part of their Council Tax. Of the 12,411 responses received, 69% stated 'No' and 31% stated 'Yes'.

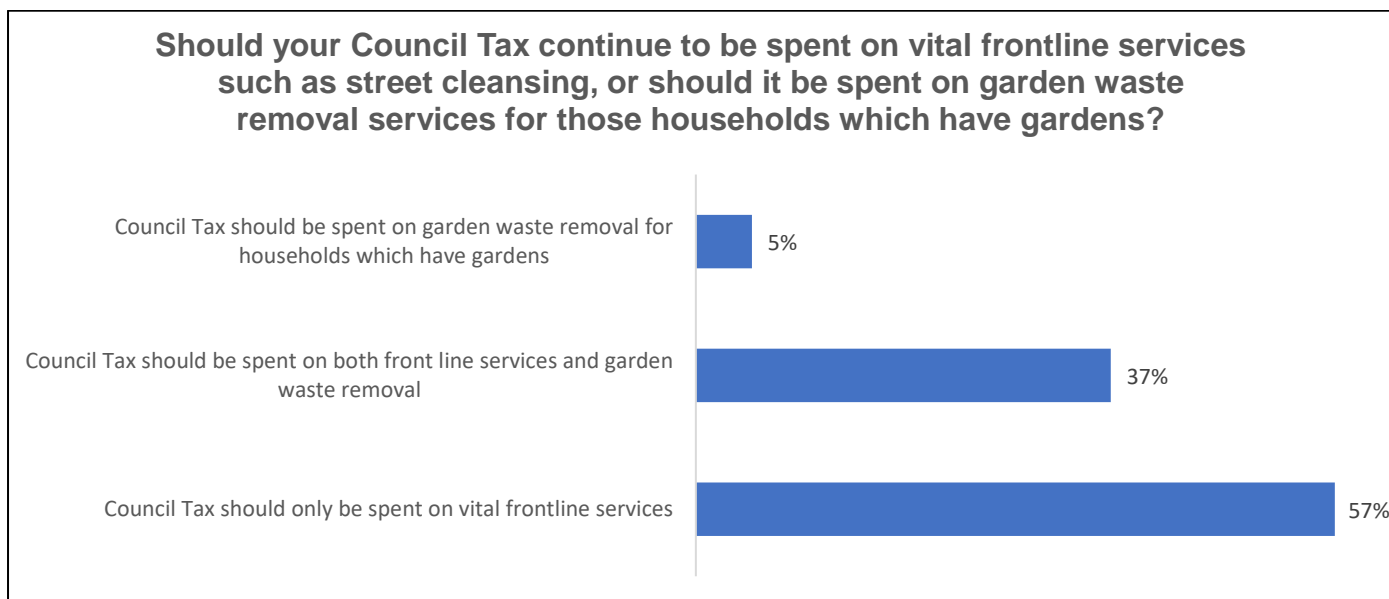


Base: 12,411

3b. Spending Council Tax on frontline services

Residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect on whether Council Tax should continue to be spent on frontline environmental services (including street cleaning, grass cutting, environmental enforcement, etc), or whether it should be spent on garden waste removal services for those households which have gardens. 12,782 responses were received. 57% felt that 'Council Tax should only be spent on vital frontline services'; 37% stated that 'Council Tax should be spent on both front-line services and garden

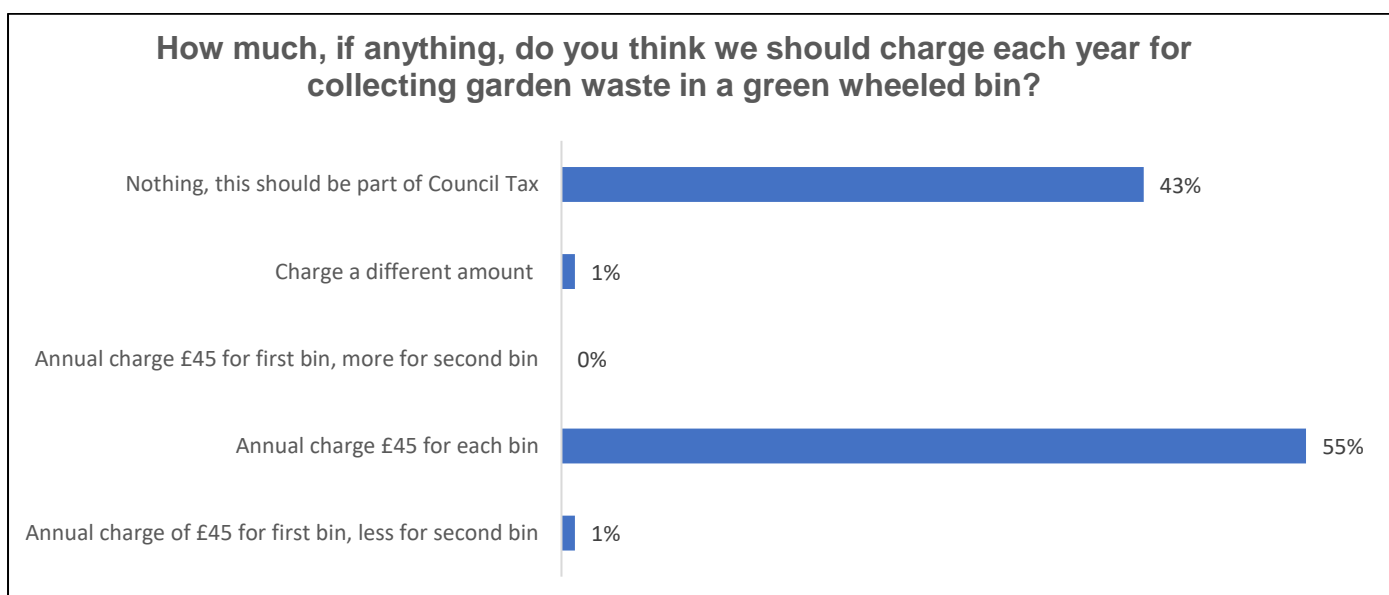
waste removal'; and 5% stated that 'Council Tax should be spent on garden waste removal for households which have gardens'.



Base: 12,782

3c. Preferred charging structure

All stakeholders were asked to consider the proposed pricing options for the proposal. This included additional charges for procuring more than one green waste bin. The consultation outlined how the preferred pricing structure for Bolton Council would be an annual charge of £45 for the first bin and £45 for anyone wanting a second green bin. Of the 12,835 stakeholders responding to the question, 55% stated that if the proposal was implemented that the annual charge for each bin should be £45. 43% stated their preferred option would be to change 'nothing, as this should be part of Council Tax'.



Base: 12,838

77 respondents provided an alternative costing model to those outlined within the consultation. 55 of these comments are categorised in the table below.

Pricing range	Number of responses
£0 - £10	13
Under £20	12
Under £25	13
Under £30	9
Under £40	8

10 stakeholders suggest a charging structure based on a 'pay as you go' / guaranteed service delivery, ***“charge per collection, I don't need garden waste collecting every 2 weeks”***. Prices range from £1 - £2.50, with one suggestion of £5 per collection.

Some comments reflected the need for a reduce service in the winter months, ***“£20 per bin for six months (not 12 months - not needed)”*** and ***“charge for summer months”***. Whilst 1 comment called for streamlining of pricing across Greater Manchester and Lancashire, avoiding a future postcode lottery, ***“There should be a consistent rate across GM and Lancashire, you should create inequalities across different towns”***.

6 suggestions outline having a different charge for additional bins:

- *“1st Free £45 for second”*.
- *“Nil for first one, £45 for every additional”*
- *“Zero charge for first bin, £20 for any additional bin.”*
- *“No charge for first bin, more for second bin”*

Other comments were received which called for charges to be frozen for a period of time and not subject to future price increase, ***“£45 annually fixed for a minimum 10 years”***; as well as ensuring that residents were getting value for money for the Council Tax they pay, ***“I am in favour of introducing a £45 charge for garden waste ONLY if it means Council Tax payers see a reduction or freeze in their Council Tax. As someone with a garden I do see that it is not fair for those without gardens to subsidise garden waste removal, but I wanted to make the general point that Council Tax is now very expensive and we are not seeing great returns for our money.”***

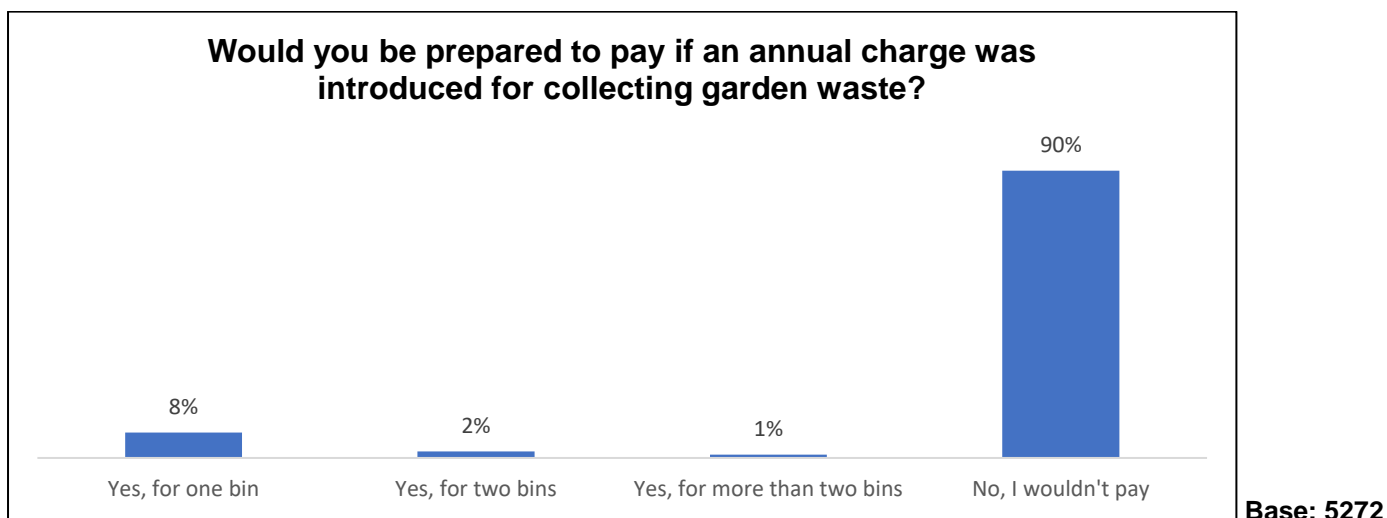
4. Current Service

All stakeholders were asked what type of green bin they currently use. Of the 12,846 responses received, 42% have a large green wheeled bin for both garden and food waste. 57% have a small green caddy for

food waste only (and will not be impacted by the proposal). 2% have neither and will not be impacted by the proposal.

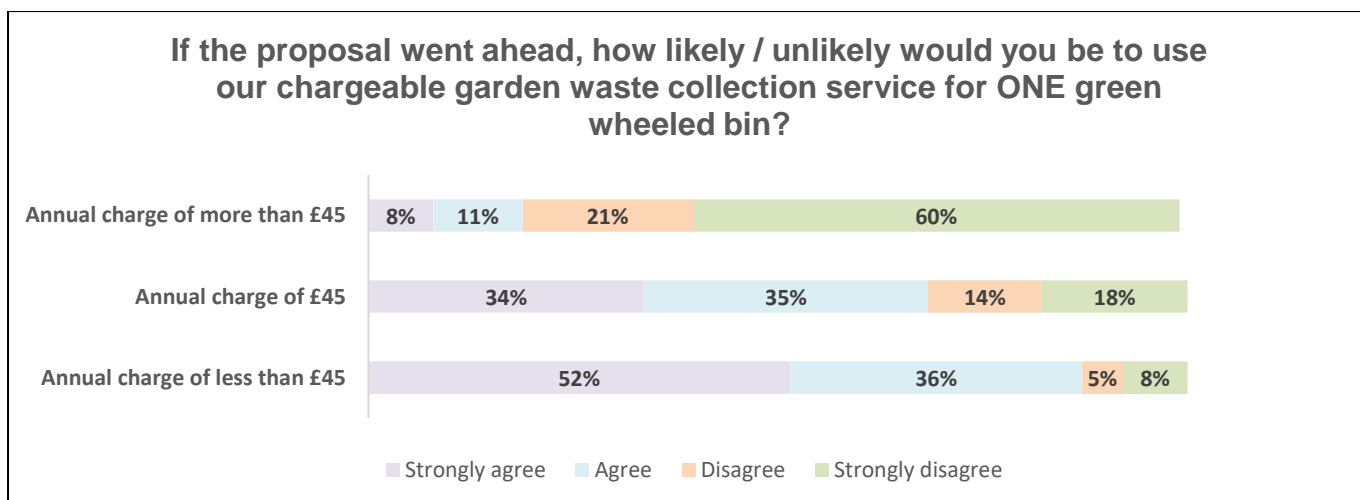
5a. Future Use

Bolton Council outlined that the preferred pricing option for a chargeable garden waste removal service would be £45, anything less than that would result in the Environmental Directorate not being able to meet the savings of £1 million for 2025 / 2026. Residents and stakeholders were asked whether they would be willing to pay an annual charge for garden waste removal. Of the 5,272 responses received, 90% stated they wouldn't be willing to pay for the service. Only 8% would be willing to pay an annual charge for one bin, 2% for two bins, and 1% for multiple bins.



5b. Annual charge for one bin

Of the 8% of stakeholders who responded that they would pay an annual charge for one bin only, 88% agreed that they would likely pay less than £45 for their annual removal of garden waste. 69% agreed they would likely pay the preferred option of £45 annual charge; and 81% stated they would unlikely pay an annual charge of more than £45 annually.



Base average: 417

246 stakeholders went on to comment further, offering an alternative charge for the proposed annual fee.

The majority of respondents felt that £25 or £1 per bin collection seemed a reasonable pricing structure, if bins could be emptied every 2 weeks. For those stating that the preferred price for emptying green waste should be under £10, this also included comments which said the service should be free to residents, **“0, this should be the included as part of the council tax, in this process you are not saving £1,000,000 but trying to generate an additional £1,000,000. Stop wasting tax payers money in the first place”**.

Other comments reflected that there should be consideration of residents who pay varying levels of Council Tax, **“I believe that Council Tax charges vary according to the house. As such I already pay through my council tax for the collection of green waste”** and **“Council Tax bands take into account the fact that some people have a garden and others do not. Those that do will be paying more Council Tax, so why the need for an extra charge?”**

A number of comments were received that referred to collections being seasonal.

- *“I dont want to pay for winter months.”*
- *“£25. Most people don’t cut their grass from September to March so you would be charging just for food waste collection.”*
- *“Garden waste is negligible in winter months so no more than £30”.*
- *“I would be prepared to pay £45 for the first bin and £15 for the 2nd bin. Given that my garden produces a lot less green garden waste in the Winter and Spring months I think £60 is fair.”*

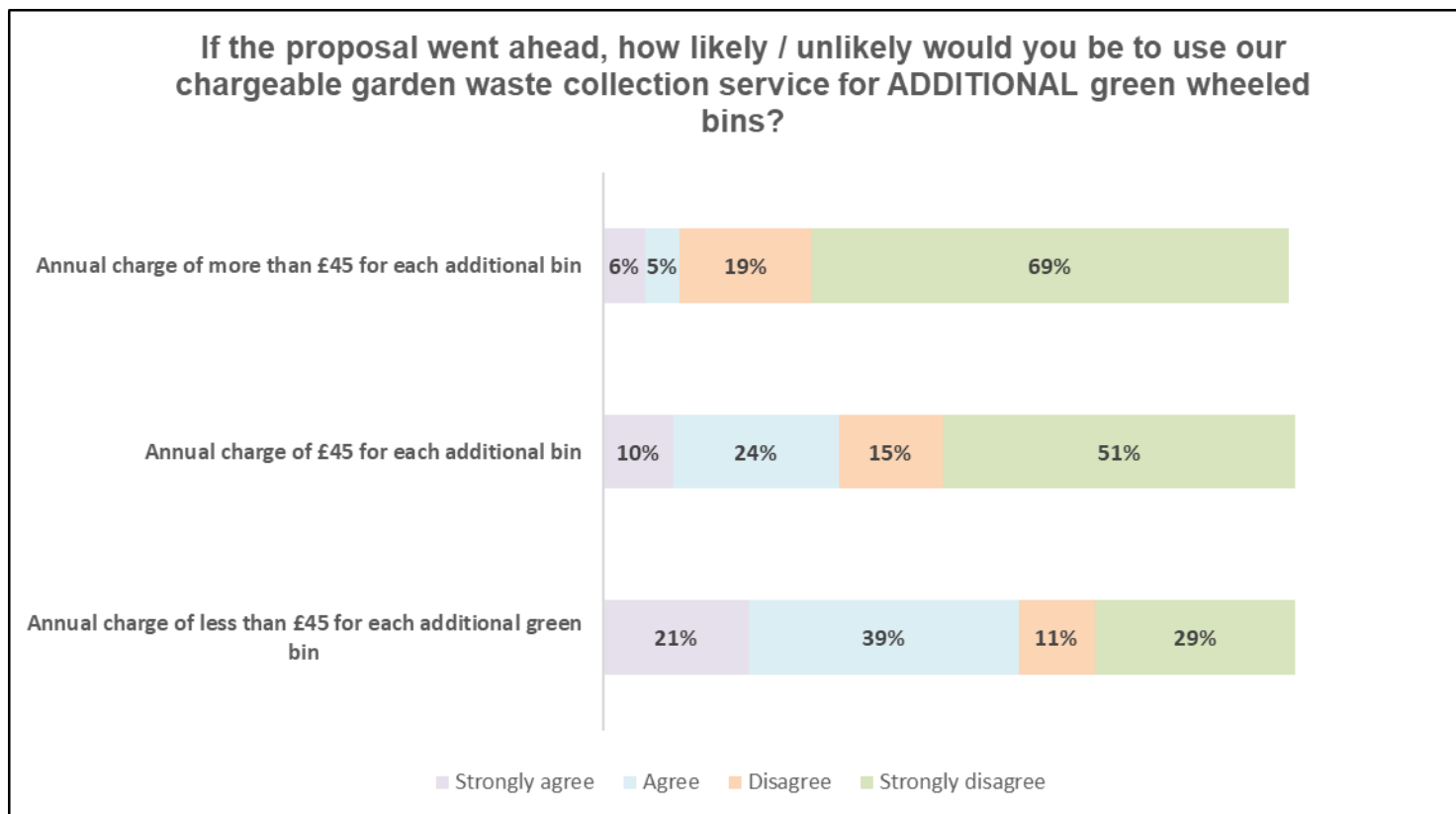
Additional comments received made comparisons to other local authorities.

- *“It needs to be in line with other authorities”.*
- *“Other councils in Lancashire and Cheshire charge between £20 and £35 per year for their Green Bin waste removal”.*
- *“Other councils seem to think £35 pa is adequate”*

Pricing range	Number of responses
£0 - £10	40
Under £20	32
Under £25	44
Under £30	39
Under £40	10
£45	25
£50	18
Under £60	6
£70 - £75	5

5c. Charging structure for additional green wheeled bins

Residents and stakeholders that indicated that they would require an additional green wheeled bin (3%) were asked to consider how likely they would be to use the chargeable garden waste collection service. Of the 101 responses received, 60% stated that they would likely pay less than £45 for the green waste removal for their additional bin. 34% stated they would likely pay the preferred option of £45 annual charge for each additional bin; and 88% stated they would unlikely pay an annual charge of more than £45 annually.



Base average: 101

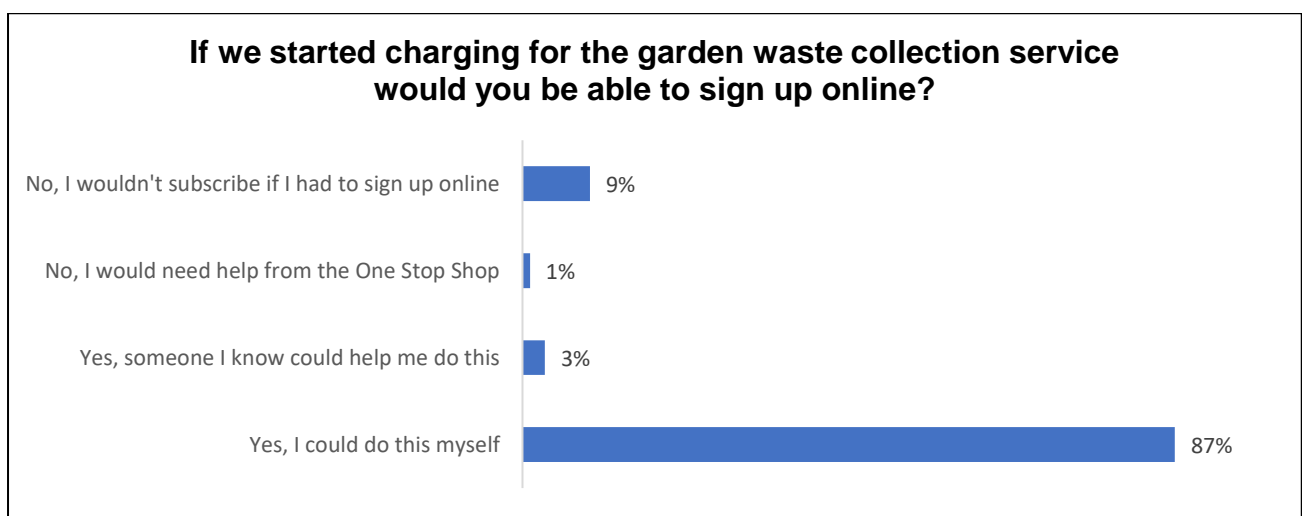
40 stakeholders went on to comment further, offering an alternative charge for the annual fee for additional green wheeled bins. Their alternative proposals are outlined in the table below.

Pricing range	Number of responses
£0 - £10	10
Under £20	8
Under £25	8
Under £30	3
Under £40	1
£45	4
£50	3

6a. Signing up and Direct Debit

If the proposal to charge for collecting garden waste was brought in, Bolton Council would adopt a digital online sign-up system, with support offered via Bolton One Stop Shop to support those who are digitally excluded. All stakeholders that indicated they had a green bin in the previous question were asked whether they would have the skills and technology to sign-up to an online service. Of the 538 responses received, 87% felt confident in being able to sign-up to a digital service.

For those stakeholders that would find the online service difficult to engage with, 3 went on to comment further. 1 individual stated that suspicion into computerised systems would be a barrier for engagement. 1 stated that they would require further assistance. Whilst another individual felt they would need support navigating the sign-up digital process.



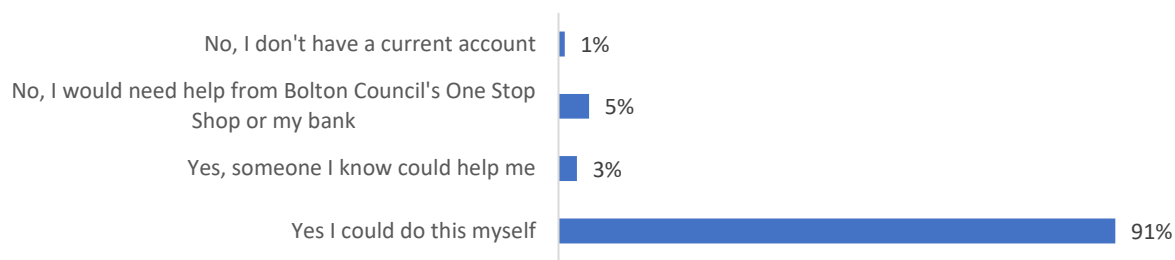
Base: 538

6b. Setting up an annual direct debit

Respondents were also asked if they felt capable of setting up an annual direct debit, if the proposal was implemented. Of the 530 responses were received, 91% stated they felt capable of setting up a Direct Debit independently.

20 respondents outlined that setting up an annual direct debit would be challenging, with the majority of those responses reflecting frustration with the proposal, stating that it is the Council's responsibility to set up Direct Debits for residents, **“want my money you can do the work for it”** and **“you do the work to get my money”**. 3 comments were received that specifically asked for technical assistance in setting up a Direct Debit.

Would you be able to set up an annual direct debit payment to pay for a chargeable garden waste service?

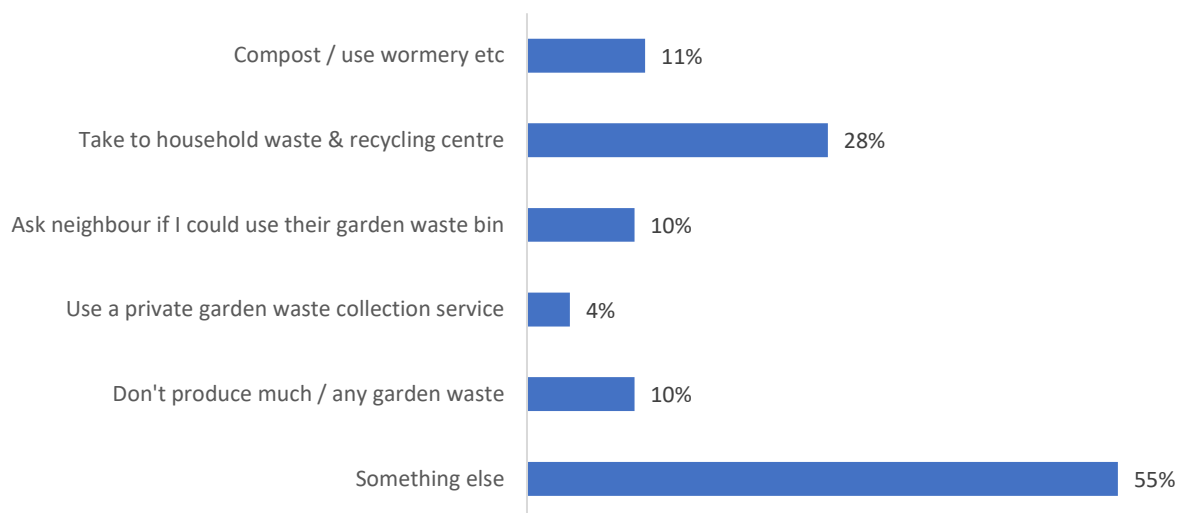


Base: 530

7a. Disposing of garden waste

Residents and stakeholders were asked to consider what they would do with their garden waste if they were to opt out of a chargeable garden waste service. 4,657 respondents participated in the question. 28% would take their green garden waste to a household waste and recycling centre; 11% would compost their waste; and 10% would ask a neighbour if they could use their garden waste bin. 10% stated they didn't produce much garden waste to warrant opting into the service. 55% of stakeholders stated they would do something else.

What would you do with your garden waste if you didn't use our chargeable garden waste service?



Base: 4,657

7b. Alternative ways to dispose of garden waste

Of those stakeholders that stated they would do something else with their garden waste, 1,981 went on to comment further. Whilst some comments referenced the alternatives outlined in the previous question, including taking green waste to a recycle centre, the majority of comments indicated adverse ways of

disposing of waste and the wider differential impact the proposal could have. These comments are categorised into 9 key themes, which are outlined in the table below.

Please say what you'd do with your garden waste		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Using existing household waste collections	848
b.	Disposing on green sites / fly tipping	494
c.	Burning waste	218
d.	Don't know / 'my business'	191
e.	Challenges with the proposal and Bolton Council / Don't agree	144
f.	Alterations to gardens and the wider environmental impact	118
g.	Impact to protected and vulnerable groups	112
h.	Compost or leave waste	61
i.	Cumulative impact of green waste by third parties	50

a. Using existing household waste collections

848 stakeholders stated that an alternative way to dispose of green garden waste would be to use the existing infrastructure, with the majority of comments stating they would use the general household waste bin. Others stated that they would continue to use their green waste bin, or would dispose of garden waste in someone else's bin, including their neighbours or employers waste collection, or even a council bin.

- *"Discreetly put it in neighbouring and/or public litter bins".*
- *"As a pensioner who cannot afford an increase and who no longer drives, I would use my black bin."*
- *"Bag it and put it in the black/grey bin".*
- *"Bag it up and put it in the grey bin, I currently recycle everything I can. My slim grey bin is usually only 50% full so I have capacity."*
- *"Black bin would be only option".*
- *"Carry on putting it in the food waste bin".*
- *"Continue to put it in the green bin. If it's being collected anyway, can't see how it makes a difference whether it's food or garden waste in it."*
- *"Continue to use the green bin I already pay for in my council tax".*
- *"Use other bins (to hide it)."*
- *"Bag the waste and place in my grey bin which would go against my principles of recycling/composting."*
- *"Hide it in my other bins. Your having it one way or the other".*
- *"Put it in a black bin liner and send it through household bin collection".*
- *"Put it in bins around the estate".*
- *"Probably put them in a council bin on the street, so they would be collected anyway".*
- *"Take it to the bins near the shops".*
- *"Take it work and use their bin".*

b. Disposing on green sites / fly tipping

494 residents and stakeholders referred to disposing of their garden waste away from their properties. These included green sites like fields, woodland and farmland; as well as urban areas including highways and council properties and maintained land.

- *“All fallen leaves I would blow onto the roadway as I do not have trees so not my responsibility.”*
- *“Allow to decompose in the forest area behind my house”.*
- *“As its garden waste i will return it to nature elsewhere”.*
- *“Dump in countryside”.*
- *“Dump it at the town hall steps.”*
- *“Chuck it on seven acres”.*
- *“Come and dispose of it at the Town Hall”.*
- *“Tip grass clippings underneath our boundary hedge.”*
- *“Deliver to the town hall and let the politicians deal with it.”*
- *“Leave it on the side of the road for the council to sort out”.*
- *“Leave it on the foot path for you to remove it!”*
- *“Tip it in the field - you leave me with no choice”*
- *“Dump on the council grass verge outside my house”.*
- *“Can’t get to waste disposal site. So ? Onto the field”.*
- *“Leave it in street for council to move as you tax me enough as it is”.*
- *“I’d guess fields and park areas would become dumping ground for garden waste. I suspect the side of dark footpaths would get dumped with garden waste”.*

c. Burning waste

218 residents suggested burning their green waste, as an alternative if the proposal is implemented. Some indicated that they would use incinerators for this process.

- *“Burn in my incinerator”.*
- *“Burn it after drying”.*
- *“Burn it adding to environmental pollution”.*
- *“Burn it in an incinerator bin including plastics”.*
- *“Burn it in garden at a time and in a place that wouldn't affect my neighbours.”*
- *“Burn it. Like everyone else will be. Then youll see where your money goes...wasted on FIRE SERVICE CALL OUTS when people burn their garden waste too close to houses and fences never mind near flammables.”*
- *“Have a Bonfire in my garden”.*
- *“I would burn the waste myself”.*

d. Don't know / 'my business'

191 residents and stakeholders are unsure what they would do if the proposal was implemented. Some residents feel that it is inappropriate for the Council to ask what residents would do, as they would be opting out of the service.

- *“Don't know as I am not physically capable of doing anything else with it!”*
- *“Don't know how or where I'd put my grass cuttings and annual garden hedge trimmings”*
- *“Don't know yet”.*
- *“Don't know, it shouldn't be charged”.*
- *“Dont know I dont have transport i work full time and im 60 so you tell me”.*

- *“Haven't got a clue, pensioner that doesn't drive”*
- *“Don't know yet, the proposal is ridiculous”.*
- *“Haven't decided yet. Hopefully this “garden tax” won't be successful.”*
- *“None of your business if your not collecting it”.*
- *“That's for me to decide”.*
- *“Unsure this is unreasonable of the council”.*

e. Challenges with the proposal and Bolton Council / Don't agree

144 comments focus specifically on the opposition to the proposed charges, particularly as residents understand this to be part of their *'rising'* Council Tax payments. Residents are concerned that the differentiation in the Council Tax banding already takes account of larger properties with gardens, and as a result feel that the proposal would lead to residents paying additionally for the service they receive.

Residents also reflected upon the initial questions asked within the survey, around *'properties which do not have gardens, continuing to contribute to the garden waste removal service as part of their Council Tax'*, and questioned whether use/non-use of services would result in a reduction in Council Tax payments.

Further comments within this theme call into question Bolton Council's general service as a local authority, with residents frustrated by the reduction in overall service delivery and the quality of services received.

- *“As we pay band E we pay more in council tax than people with smaller properties with no garden anyway”.*
- *“Our council tax helps to fund police services yet households don't necessarily use police forces in their entire lives - should those households pay less council tax??”*
- *“I pay for a lot of council services I don't use eg taxis for children going to special schools etc Perhaps council can start charging tax per service”.*
- *“Before I talk about garden waste can I ask for a refund as I've never had children so not needed any children educating. I've never used the library either so my lack of use sage of those service more than makes up for the £45 you want to charge me extra for having a garden at my home!!!”*
- *“Bring a claim against Bolton Council as this is part of your duties and what we pay Council Tax for and it's ridiculous for you to charge for this when you have already reduced collections”.*
- *“Council should collect it as we already pay a much higher council tax”.*
- *“Demand you take it as part of the £3600 CT I already pay!”*
- *“Do not charge us more money you tyrants”.*
- *“You have INCREASED my council tax already and have the nerve to start charging for garden waste?!?!? Be quiet!!!!!!! Start making pay cut on those over paid councillors”.*
- *“This should be included like with the other bins being emptied, (Not a seperate charge) we pay over the odds as it is in council tax.people on low wages are struggling!.”*
- *“Ridiculous proposal when I'm paying £225 council tax. Houses without gardens will be paying less council tax already - work full time, while raising a young family and now you want to charge me for the what maybe 6 times a year I dare to put a bit of my lawn in the green bin?!”*
- *“I think absolutely ridiculous that the incompetent Council now have to charge for garden waste as people with gardens already pay more council tax, council tax has increased significantly in recent years.”*
- *“It's not like Bolton Council provide excellent service with their other waste collection services. Every week there are bins being left on the roadside still full.”*
- *“Labour decided we need separate bins and now want to charge for it!? This is a basic service and should be covered. Go find cuts elsewhere”.*
- *“I'm sick of being ripped off by Bolton council tax up every year services reduced and poor.”*

f. Alterations to gardens and the wider environmental impact

118 comments were received from residents that stated that the proposal could lead to alterations being made to gardens. Some residents stated that they would have to consider stopping to maintain their gardens and borders, opting to rewild. Other comments stated that consideration would be made as to whether to strip back gardens, paving over lawns, or replacing with astro-turf.

Comments were also received that discussed the wider environmental impact of these changes, including the impacts to biodiversity and the cumulative impact of possible flooding. In addition, comments were received that referenced the proposal's impact on the borough's Climate Emergency target, with possible reductions in recycling rates and the increased use of incinerators for burning garden waste.

- *"Astro turf garden instead no garden waste then".*
- *"Be forced to cut down natural garden and get artificial grass and turn the garden into a driveway."*
- *"Change lawn to artificial grass or flags".*
- *"Concrete over my green areas".*
- *"Cut down any bushes and foliage and tarmac any green area. Obviously not an environmentally beneficial option."*
- *"I could consider pebble dashing the garden and removing the privets and replacing with a wooden fence."*
- *"This would be an incentive for households to remove any shrubs, flowers or grass from their garden which again is not good for the environment."*
- *"I have 2 lawns to mow, so I would probably not mow them and let them grow wild until you the council had to step in."*
- *"Let garden overgrow and not maintain it".*
- *"Maybe even just pave block the entire garden front and back so I have no green space at all, meaning that there is no permeable surface for rain and surface water to drain away, meaning that all of my surface water runs out into the streets causing surface water flooding."*
- *"Pave over garden leading to more risk of flooding".*
- *"I think you are making it incredibly difficult for households to support greening up and reducing climate change by charging for basics in addition to an already extortionate council tax!"*
- *"I could even burn it I suppose. Why not contribute to CO2 emissions further causing greater global warming whilst we're at it."*
- *"Will flood defences be charged for when we become a concrete town? Reducing wildlife, green areas, and contributing to air pollution?"*
- *"The Council is clearly not committed or concerned about recycling."*

g. Impact to protected and vulnerable groups

112 comments were received which focus specifically on the wider impacts of the proposal to vulnerable and protected groups. There was specific concern on the impact to older and disabled people, as well as socio-economic concerns for those on low incomes, including for residents who don't own a car and may be disproportionately impacted in their access to recycling centres. Residents who live in multi-occupancy households were also concerned by the proposal and how it would be implemented in these residences (including residencies for older people).

Residents with protected characteristics, including socio-economic:

- *“As a disabled person who is solely reliant on disability benefits, neither do I have the spare money to pay for this service nor do I have the means of disposing it myself due to severely limited mobility.”*
- *“Don't have any income to pay extra for anything, already can't afford to have the heating on this Winter.”*
- *“Given we are pensioners with health and mobility problems plus very fixed income the solution to this problem needs more consideration, shelling out more money when EVERYTHING else is going up in price and the government is targeting pensioners income, is not feasible”.*
- *“I probably would not be able to care for my garden as many elderly or low income families. What will they do. This is a stupid and callous idea”.*
- *“As a person who is blind and low vision walking the streets with the reduction in environmental services hedge trimming, weeds and pavements This is more dangerous as I've scratched my face on overgrown hedges recently, so having my garden is essential in promoting my health and well-being. therefore placing me in financial poverty, more likely to use national health service and rely on carers or people to help me be independent would put financial cost up in other areas.”*
- *“I'd struggle as I'm in my 90 years I can't drive or walk good”.*
- *“As a 86 year old,I can't manage taking it to a tip”.*
- *“Im not sure as im disabled but i cant afford to pay the extra”.*
- *“I do not have transport to take to recycle centre and I'm not well enough to do heavy gardening.”*
- *“Don't drive so can't take to recycle and can't afford heating so can't afford a private waste collection.”*
- *“As i am unable to drive have no access to vehicles i have no other option to have removed or litter it i cannot afford to pay extra on top of already high council tax”*

Multi-occupancy households:

- *“14 flats use the one Green bin for food waste and for the small gardens that some residents maintain, which are not maintained by the landlords hit and miss garden contractor, a service for which we pay a service charge. So you figure out what we are supposed to do?”*
- *“This is just another stupid idea which doesn't take into consideration of people who have communal bins. We pay our council tax too you know!”*
- *“There is 8 flats with one huge garden at the back”*

h. Compost or leave waste

61 comments were received from homeowners that outline how they currently compost their waste or would use this method of an alternative to opting out of a 'green waste removal service'. Some stakeholders state they would leave their waste to decompose in the garden but highlighted the increased risk of leaf matter blowing into neighbouring gardens, footpaths and highways.

- *“Happy to put grass cuttings at the bottom of my garden to break down.”*
- *“I need to learn how to compost, this seems a good alternative.”*
- *“Allow it to rot in the garden”.*
- *“Already compost as much as we can, but there's more than will fit in at certain times of the year and stuff which isn't suitable to go into home compost bin such as branches we don't have the equipment to shred.”*
- *“I already compost what I can.”*
- *“Create a habitat pile at the bottom of my garden”.*
- *“Dump it in the garden to build up.”*
- *“Lay it in the hedgerow”.*
- *“Leave all the cuttings on the floor and let the wind blow it away for free”.*

- *“Leave it on the drive for the wind to blow it away”.*
- *“Let it build up in a corner and let rats run all over it! This is ridiculous!”*
- *“The thousands of leaves my bushes drop will just fill the street instead of the hours i now spend sweeping them up from my gardens and street they will just get left, are road sweepers then going to cope?”*

i. Cumulative impact of green waste by third parties

50 comments were received from individuals that highlight their frustration with the proposal, as are currently maintaining the green waste fallen from third party sites, including trees and shrubs owned by Bolton Council. Some comments reflect concern with trees that have preservation orders on them, forcing them to be maintain and subject to the proposed charges. Other residents felt the proposal could have cumulative effects on the relationship between property owners, specifically around taking account of, and responsibility for, clearing of green waste.

- *“100% of my winter garden waste comes from the overhanging trees in Heaton crematorium...why should I pay to dispose of this.”*
- *“You slap preservation orders on trees that are not mine that produce huge amounts of leaves that land on my property I will throw the leaves back onto council land*
- *“A lot of garden waste is produced by council woodland at the back of my garden I dont want to pay for your waste and hazardous trees encroaching my garden and property”.*
- *“A lot of leaves fall on my land from trees that I don’t own.”*
- *“A lot of our garden waste is produced from the large trees with the council run park at the back of the house. This should effectively be put back into the park and be removed if the garden waste is not being collected. We should not be expected to pay or remove this”.*
- *“My property is completely surrounded by mature trees (that the council ironically prohibits or limits us trimming) and this already costs us around £1000 a year, mainly through autumn to keep on top of. An additional charge is absurd for a service that the council has always and should include.”*
- *“Ask the council to collect it. I live in a conservation area with woods and trees causing leaves and broken branches in my garden.”*
- *“As its leaves from a Bolton at Home tree I will bag and take it to there offices.”*
- *“Housing association have trees overhanging all my garden, they won’t chop any down, every year I collect them all in my bin and it takes weeks to get rid of them and they arnt even my leaves”.*
- *“Most of the leaves and branches overhang from trees in the park.”*
- *“Most of my garden waste comes from my neighbours trees and other trees not in our garden”.*
- *“I have trees at the side of my property belonging to a pub and council land I will collect the fallen leaves and throw them back over the fence onto there land”.*
- *“I would no longer cut the 150 square metres of grass at the front of my property which is council owned land, nor clear the fallen leaves from the large beech which is also council land and leave it to your park services who have never taken responsibility for it”.*

Other comments

Other comments were received which reflect frustration with current waste service provision, *“you miss out collections anyway”, “ridiculous for you to charge for this when you have already reduced collections”* and *“It's not like Bolton Council provide excellent service with their other waste collection services. Every week there are bins being left on the roadside still full.”*

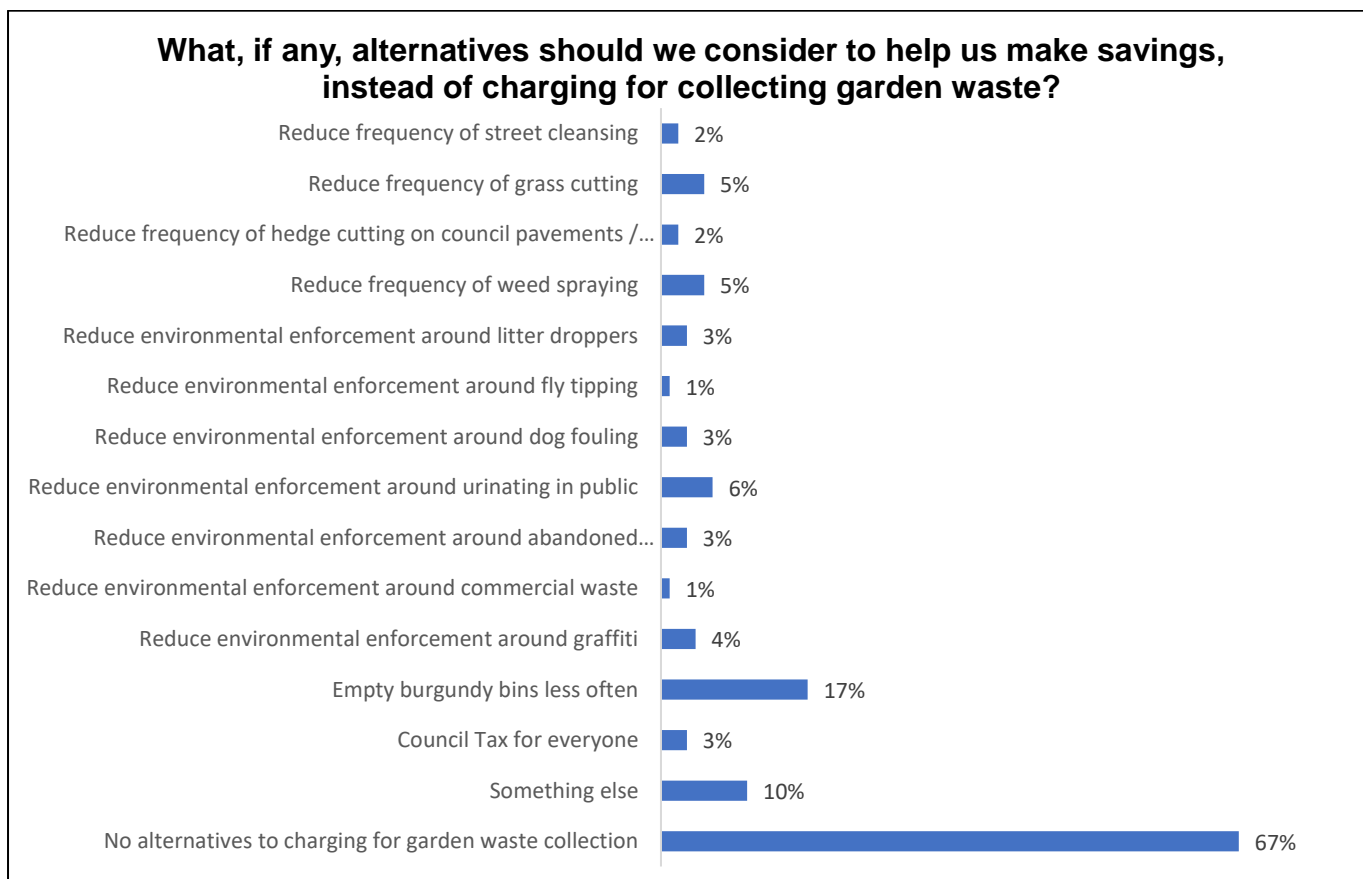
Some comments highlight concerns with the consultation process, namely the design of the survey questions, *“Can’t believe these questions as so biasedly written. Awful”* and *“who wrote this survey? It is poorly designed with leading questions”*.

Some stakeholders reflected on the need to explore alternative services and solutions, *“look for a cheaper alternative”*, *“Take it to parents bin who live in a different borough”*, *“put it in my Mums garden bin in Radcliffe”* and *“see if the gardener will take it”*

8a. Alternatives

Whilst the Environmental Services Directorate have been asked to contribute £1million of savings in 2025/26, the Directorate and the Executive Cabinet Member were keen to hear from stakeholders whether alternative options could be explored from within the Directorate for Place Services. Stakeholders were presented with a list of service areas which sit within the budget allocation for Environment and Place based services. Whilst these options provided stakeholders with an overview of where savings could be made, all responders were invited to put forward their own ideas for areas where savings could be made, or areas where revenue could be generated.

12,369 stakeholders engaged in this question, with 67% stating that *‘there are no alternatives to charging for a green waste collection’*. Where alternative suggestions are provided, the top answer was *‘emptying burgundy bins less’* (17%).



Base: 12,369

8b. Stakeholder suggestions for alternative efficiency savings

Respondents were asked whether there are further alternative approaches that could be explored to make the savings required. 1,196 comments were received, which have been broken down into the following 8 themes.

What other alternatives should we consider for Environmental Services?		
Code	Description of impact	Number of respondents
a)	Council wide efficiency savings	490
b)	Challenges against Bolton Council, including Council Tax and Councillors	402
c)	Reduced or non-existent services	177
d)	Bin Collections	98
e)	Alternative proposals	88
f)	Reducing public services	68
g)	Community assets	67
h)	Prosecution	55

8a. Council wide efficiency savings

490 respondents state that Bolton Council should make efficiency savings. Two main themes were evident within this strand; *“making reductions of staff (including councillors)”* or *“by make savings across the council”*.

The majority of comments state that managers salaries could be reduced; non-essential staff roles could be decreased; council staff pensions could also be decreased. Other respondents state that councillors could have their expenses reduced and specified that the number of councillors per ward could also be reduced.

Respondents also suggest that savings could be made across the Council by carrying out audits to enable savings to be found. Other comments include making reductions in other Council areas such as the Mayoral budget or the cycle lanes. Respondents also suggest that the Council could make money from selling/investing items (such as the compost, created from garden waste).

Reduce staff including councillors

- *“Council to reduce its workforce and labour cost.”*
- *“Cut back management to ensure saving costs are met.”*
- *“Freeze pay for employees. Sack people who don't achieve set objectives, scrap work from home.”*
- *“Ridiculous pension contributions.”*
- *“Reduce your fantastic final salary Pension scheme to be more in line with private sector.”*
- *“Cut managers salaries from the top of the council. Trim the top of the salary tree!!”*
- *“Pay the senior leadership at the council less salary or salary's inline with private sector or reduce unnecessary management jobs.”*
- *“Have less top heavy people at management level of the council not value for money*
- *“Have a cull on staff that aren't essential.”*
- *“Cut down staff sickness (holidays) Cut down on layers of management. Stop made up PC jobs.”*
- *“Councillor and high council mangerment to take a pay cut.”*

- *“Cut councillors expenses. Cut council employee absences.”*
- *“Paying less councillor expenses and bonuses and reinvest it into services needed.”*
- *“Reduce councillors expenses, reduce management expenses.”*

Making savings across the council

- *“Make savings elsewhere.”*
- *“Audit all your services and find savings by stopping wasting money internally on staff you don’t need and implementing stupid ideas.”*
- *“Do a thorough cost savings exercise across all departments, including executives and also do we need as many councillors; merge wards?”*
- *“Efficiency in services eg if website reflects the council it is very clunky and disorganised.”*
- *“Free up the budget by reducing spend in other areas. This could include reducing Mayoral budget, stopping wasteful spend on clean air zone signage, unnecessary replacement of bee network signs throughout area, money wasted on the installation and then reversal of unwanted cycle lanes.”*
- *“Be more prudent with the apportion of funds allocated for waste. Look at payroll (middle management) look at sick pay. Review what is wasted in stationary. I recently received three letters informing me of change of date to road closure. Be more communicative with scheduling.”*
- *“Invest this money more wisely and reduce management bonuses for their failure to provide adequate services to residents.”*
- *“Be more efficient and also make money from selling the items.”*
- *“Improve budget setting and efficiency.”*
- *“Improve council spending elsewhere.”*

8b. Challenges against Bolton Council, including Council Tax and Councillors

402 respondents express dissatisfaction and frustration with Bolton Council, with regards to a proposed increase in Council Tax. Respondents stated that their Council Tax is already high and dispute the increase of a further tax. Stakeholders also state that their Council Tax could be better spent on front line services, including staffing such services. Respondents also express frustrations with Councillor and MP’s salaries and expenses, stating that they should be reduced.

- *“We are charged enough for council tax already as well as every other tax and every single service has reduced over the years. Waste collection including garden waste should be a minimum. Charging will only increase fly tipping.”*
- *“Our council tax is already extremely high, so just adding a 'garden' tax isnt the solution.”*
- *“Chase up those residents of the borough that dont pay their Council Tax.”*
- *“You have increased year on year the council Tax to the max and the service is still very poor clearly this is not working if anything all services have suffered.”*
- *“Council tax has risen substantially year on year and at the same time services are being cut.”*
- *“Council tax is killing the working class, stop charging more money from the public and instead speak to the government in wasting money on wars and other agendas.”*
- *Councilors reduce their personal claims! They earn enough wages as it is.*
- *Get rid of a few of the councillors we don’t need 60 of them and they get paid £75,000 a year so by getting rid of a few that will be a massive saving.*

8c. Reduced or non-existent services

177 of respondents outline their dissatisfaction in the current delivery or non-delivery of Council services, stating that volunteers often support the general upkeep of the environment. Stakeholders also indicate that fly tipping is a challenge across the borough and are concerned that the proposal will worsen the issue.

- “All of the above have been reduced on our estate, if its reduced any further it wont happen at all. Grass cut once and it was a terrible job, local residents already litter pick.”
- “All the above are already cut I’ve not seen anyone working to keep bolton tidy and clean only volunteers it’s the scruffiest place I’ve been to.”
- “As you will very well know, all your alternatives don't make sense. You've already SAVED ££££££'s by not providing services which were already your duty.”
- “Environmental services have already been cut massively, our town is an eyesore at times with weeds & overgrown public grasslands. Fly tipping is a huge problem & will only get worse if you start to charge.”
- “I don’t see any enforcement for any of the options up here - fly tipping is the worst it has been & the bins & cleaning streets is done by volunteers!”
- “I would like to know where the enforcement officers are who deal with litter dropping, dog fouling and urinating in public? Never have I seen any enforcement officers in the area I live. If these do not exist these services may as well be reduced.”

9d. Bin Collections

98 respondents reference the current bin collection service. Recommendations were made suggesting that bin collections could be aligned with current collection timetables. Other comments include reducing the frequency of bin collections. Respondents state that green waste collections could be reduced during winter months.

- *“Burgundy bins monthly instead of paper bins. This should be returned to fortnightly.”*
- *“less frequent ?”*
- *“Reducing burgandy bin collections to allow for green waste produced by volunteer groups to be collected like the green volunteer litter picking bags are collected. Many groups will also keep overgrown areas/footpaths tidied, but have to dispose of green waste themselves currently.”*
- *“Collect in summer (ie gardening time) only. Not needed in winter.”*
- *“Empty green bins less in winter months as it is not used as frequently for gardening and grass cutting.”*
- *“Empty green bins less often between oct – march.”*

9e. Alternative proposals

88 responses were received suggesting alternative proposals. These have been sub-categorised into smaller categorises, including; investment into composting and recycling; alternative ways to create funds; and funding from investors or by sponsorship. Some comments suggest leaving the service delivery as it is, without the chargeable proposal.

Investment in composting and recycling

- *“Being proactive in promoting the compost made from garden waste....sell back to garden centres etc.”*
- *“Collect the garden waste and use and sell it as compost. I understand some Welsh councils do this. Set up a great big composting site.”*
- *“Increase partnership with waste for energy companies to generate more revenue from waste. Solar panels of council buildings Electrifying or hybrid fleet.”*
- *“There is a huge amount of money the council could make from recycling instead of outsourcing it to private companies.”*
- *“You should already be generating income from recycling....”*

Alternative funding

- *“Start giving incentives for people to go to recycling centres for both plastic and garden waste.”*
- *“All of these services need more money injecting into them, not less!!!”*
- *“Charge for green food waste bags.”*

Funding from sponsors

- *“As suggested seek sponsorship/ advertisement on refuse wagons.”*
- *“Use bin wagons as commercial vehicles for advertising, it is done in other towns, so why not Bolton?”*

Maintain existing services

- *“I don’t understand why this is an issue right now. The current system has always worked so make the necessary changes to save money within the council before passing the costs onto council tax payers.”*
- *“Keep collecting garden waste as standard, no need for charge or reduce collection.”*
- *“You should carry on taking garden waste with no additional charges.”*

8f. Reducing public services

68 respondents made comments about reducing public services. Comments include having a ‘pay as you go’ Council Tax service; paying for the services that you use. Respondents also state that library services could be reduce or closed completely. Closures of the main library, museum and aquarium was also commented upon in the survey.

- *“Are you suggesting each household only pays for the services it uses? I don’t have kids at school, in care etc but I have to pay for those.”*
- *“Do we stop people paying for other services they don’t use.”*
- *“Not for environmental services but going down this route why am I paying towards education costs when I’ve no children in the house?”*
- *“Similarly to those households who dont have a garden, i dont have children, however i contribute towards them in taxes i also contribute to those who choose benefits over working for a living, so if we are going down the route of paying for what we get you can recalculate my taxes and i will contribute to what i take. I may even receive a refund!!!”*
- *“There should be an opt in and out of every service. I for example don’t use school or library services so would be happy not to pay for those but have my green bin collected instead and vice versa for people who use schools and don’t have gardens.”*
- *“Close all but the town centre library. No one uses the service as they once did they are used for everything but there original intention.”*
- *“Close libraries instead. Vast majority of public in bolton dont use them or attend them and that services cost millions per year to operate.”*
- *“Close the Aquarium. This is a service i dont use or the museum or the libarbies dont use any close those and save your million that way.”*
- *“Get rid of services like the libraries that arent used by the majority of people.”*

8g. Community assets

67 respondents commented on using the community to support environmental services. Residents suggested that the Council could make use of community payback to support environmental services. Respondents also comment on the use of volunteers who already support with litter picking in local communities. Some

stakeholders suggested the use of community bins would support environmental services and were able to include examples from localities that already have this in place.

- *“Get people on benefits to do voluntary work.”*
- *“Have the unemployed picking up litter.”*
- *“Make use of community payback to carry out tasks where possible.”*

Community volunteers

- *“I am part of a local volunteer group who go out litter picking daily in Horwich. We already do that part of the councils job, so I'd rather you empty my green bin given i have front and back gardens with hedges and grass as part of my council tax payment, without an increase in cost. I'll continue, along with the volunteers, keep our streets clean and tidy by litter picking.”*
- *“Set up volunteering to collect rubbish, schools, colleges, community service etc.”*

Community bins

- *“Community composting bins / places; somewhere local to take garden waste - less garden waste collection in the winter months when not used.”*
- *“Create community bins for garden waste therefore reducing time spend emptying bins with households in that area having a key? For example on the path next the hayward avenue little lever or on park car parks.”*
- *“Possibly consider the ways that other countries deal with household waste?”*
- *“E.g. in France have community bin areas for recycling (cans, bottles, tins and paper and card) which are much larger than household bins, and can be collected more frequently but from a smaller number of sites. Households could then be responsible for taking their recycling to the nearest community bin area. Community bin areas could be discrete, but kept clean. They don't have to smell during the summer if emptied regularly.”*

8h. Prosecution

55 respondents state that more enforcement could be implemented to those who are caught urinating or allowing dogs to foul. Other comments include the increase in prosecution to individuals/companies that are caught fly-tipping.

Enforcement fines

- *“Enforcement team should be increased to secure more convictions and use the money generated by fines to subsidise the cost.”*
- *“Charge higher fines people via enforcement infringement, increase conviction rates as well for All categories.”*
- *“In the area I live in which used to be social housing, we have very little enforcement around fly tipping, dog fouling, litter dropping, weed spraying, so maybe you could look at using Bolton at Home more and enforce charges on people who don't look after their environment / neighbourhood they live in.”*

Prosecution – fly tippers

- *“Active prosecution of fly tippers.”*
- *“Increase charges and fines on utility companies overflowing sewage into rivers. Increase charges and fines on any fly tipping or commercial waste. Increase business rates on warehouses and out of town shopping centres.”*
- *“increase the penalty around dog waste on the street.”*

Other comments

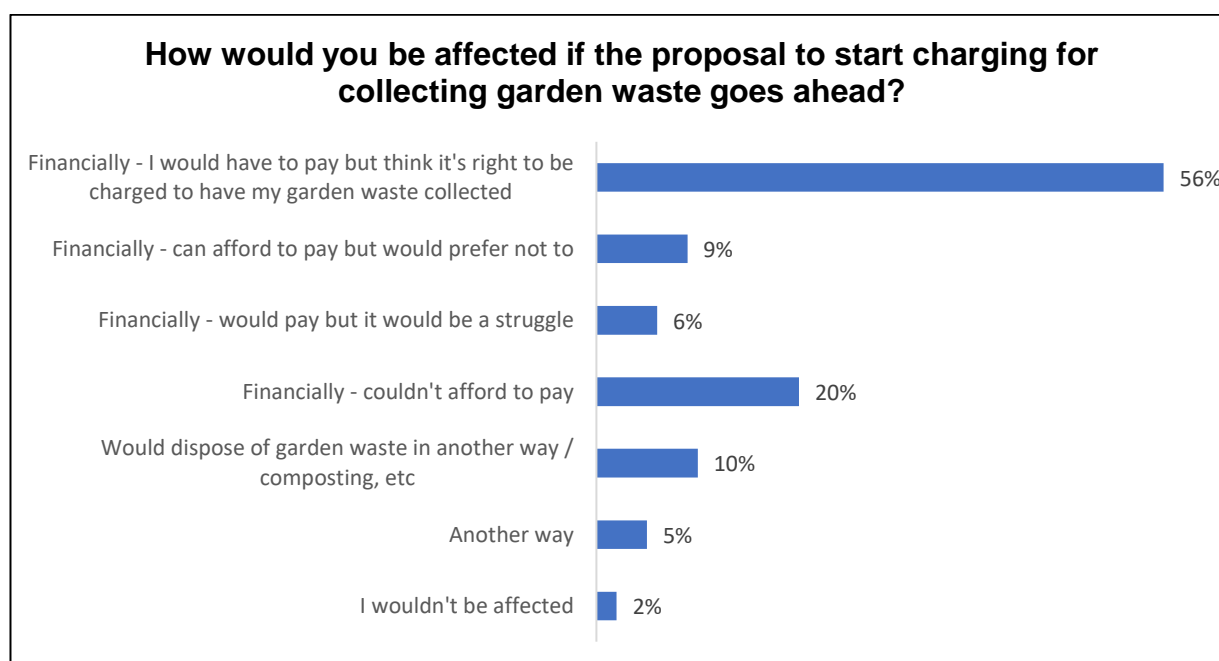
Other comments were received which reflect frustration with previous Council projects, “*Get the money back from NCP that they owe*”, “*Maybe you should stop building cycle lanes which nobody uses*”, and “*not wasting money on projects such as resurfacing areas of Bolton (i.e. Deansgate) where not required.*”

Respondents also highlight concerns with the consultation process, mainly due to the design of the survey questions, “*The alternatives are disingenuous and a very much biased. Whoever compiled this survey should be ashamed of themselves*”, “*These are all loaded questions, an absolute disgrace - engineered to give the response you've designed them for!*” and “*Frankly this survey is insulting and whoever wrote it appears to have a clear remit.*”

Some stakeholders reflected on the charges suggested within the proposal and made comments relating to financial impact to residents. “*Why should we pay extra for green waste?*” and “*Bring in a more reasonable charge for collecting household waste not everyone has a car that can go to tip or afford 25 pound per item or stop mps bonus.*”

9a. Impact

All residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect on how the proposal, to implement a chargeable green waste removal service, could impact them. Whilst a range of options were provided, residents also had the option to expand on their answer. Of the 12,700 responses received, 56% stated that they would be impacted financially, “*I would have to pay but think it's right to be charged to have my garden waste collected*”. 35% stated that they would also be financially impacted to varying degrees, with 20% stating that “*they couldn't afford to pay*”. 10% stated that they would be impacted by having to dispose of their green waste in an alternative way, and 5% stated they would be impacted in another way.



Base: 12,700

9b. Impacted in another way

450 respondents chose to make a comment outlining how they could be affected if a chargeable Green Waste Removal Service was introduced. These responses have categorised into 6 key areas. These are outlined in the table below.

Please tell us how else you'd be affected		
Code	Description of impact	Number of respondents
a)	Bolton Council / Council Tax	105
b)	(Climate) environmental / recycle / burn	100
c)	Add to general waste / black bin	91
d)	Fly tipping and pests	79
e)	Groups with a protected characteristic	73
f)	Other	70

9a. Bolton Council/Council Tax

105 respondents convey dissatisfaction with Bolton Council, as well frustration with Council Tax payments around reduced or absent services. Respondents express concern with already paying high Council Taxes, which could be compounded with additional charges for garden waste collection. There is also a strong sentiment of anger towards local councillors, with some respondents stating this could influence their future voting behaviour.

Bolton Council

- *"The council already fail to keep on top of all other road and pathway clearing, and this would just add to the problems as the public will stop doing their work for them".*
- *"I would be angry at the council".*
- *"I would be livid. I already pay council tax, and the other cut backs you suggest (eg weed spraying; hedge cutting) just don't happen any way. Sort yourselves out, Bolton Council".*
- *"In future council elections my family would remember all this and refuse to vote for anyone involved with the proposal".*
- *"It would be further affirmation of the ineptitude of any authority to do a decent job".*
- *"Listen, you're a total disgrace. You can't even provide the services your meant to. I've lost count the number of times my bin has been missed with poor 'operational issues' excuses".*

Council Tax

- *"I am ashamed with this proposal as I pay enough CTax already."*
- *"Why should we pay additional money when the current level of service isn't even maintained?"*
- *"I already pay £3000 council tax! Garden waste disposal is reflected in this cost".*
- *"I already pay council tax which has increased every year. Now it is suggested that to manage my waste I need to pay again. This is not acceptable".*

- *“I will not pay twice for this service. You charge me for waste removal as part of the current council tax”.*
- *“My existing council tax should cover this service. I contribute to children’s services and social services but don’t utilise any of them. Its only right that my charge should cover something that I am entitled to”.*
- *“We pay enough for council tax, charging us for garden waste is a joke”.*

9b. Climate (environmental/recycle/burn)

100 respondents said they would have concerns about the impact the proposal could have on the climate. Respondents state that they would stop recycling altogether, which could consequently lead to more waste being sent to landfill sites and have wider climate change consequences. Respondents indicate that they would burn garden waste, which could lead to an increase in air pollution and have a wider negative impact on air quality. Respondents would also consider removing gardens and replacing them with flags or concrete, thus impacting biodiversity in the area and potentially causing flooding as drainage could be affected.

Environmental

- *“Petrol and carbon footprint increased whilst queuing at the tip”.*
- *“There will be a detrimental effect to the street scene as people stop mowing their lawns and clearing leaves”.*
- *“I will replace my lawn with fake grass so I will not have garden waste”*
- *“I would get rid of my garden all together - which is very bad for the environment”.*
- *“Change design of garden to remove grassed areas”.*
- *“As an environment enthusiast and gardener of 60 years I might consider block paving over my garden”.*

Burn

- *“Would need to do a bonfire more often, so affecting the environment”.*
- *“Worse for the environment with all the garden waste fires I would have”.*
- *“Burn it, increasing local air pollution levels”.*
- *“I would burn it on a hot summers day”.*
- *“Impact on environment - forced to burn waste”.*

Recycle

- *“I won't be recycling”.*
- *“I wouldn't recycle green waste”.*
- *“Reduced recycling, garden waste to landfill”.*

9c. Add to general waste/black bin

91 respondents state that they would add their garden waste to their general waste collection, rather than paying an additional charge for the proposed services. Respondents reflect upon an increase in the volume of waste at landfill sites. Additionally, respondents are concerned that charges could be introduced for residents visiting recycling centres. Some comments were raised around the effect of air quality, due to an increase in car usage to recycle centres.

- *“Being charged for recycling is a retrograde step. I would resort to filling my black bin”.*
- *“I would use my black bin which would mean more trips to the tip- not very environmentally friendly”.*
- *“Go back to years ago put in general waste bin”.*
- *“I will dispose in the grey bin and stop recycling full stop!”*
- *“I would put the garden waste in black and other bins.”*
- *“My bin will still be emptied and I won't be paying twice for it.”*
- *“Would put garden waste in grey bin”.*

9d. Fly tipping and pests

79 comments were received which suggest that residents may dispose of their waste by fly tipping. As a result, the Council budget could be strained with having to retrieve waste. Respondents were also concerned that there could be an increase in pests, potentially leading to a rise in diseases, which could impact the health of residents, particularly children and the elderly.

Fly tipping

- *“On council owned green space”.*
- *“Dump it”.*
- *“Fly tipping like everyone else will”.*
- *“I'd dump my green waste anywhere and would not care”.*
- *“I would dump my garden waste on the nearby nature reserve”*

Pests

- *“Have to leave things to grow which risks attracting vermin and an eye sore and possible health & safety risk”.*
- *“If grass and bushes not cut, and let it over grow, ultimately affecting the environmental conditions eg hygiene, rats and mouse populations will grow, causing disease and health problems, more burdens on public health systems”.*
- *“Living next to a school, not removing garden waste would encourage rodents”.*

9e. Groups with a protected characteristic

73 comments indicate the challenges the proposal could have on vulnerable and protected groups. Respondents are concerned about the financial impacts the proposal could have on them, including from residents struggling financially in the current climate. Others raise concerns about the impact on communal residencies, including how the council will monitor engagement in the service.

Older residents stated that they will be financially impacted by the proposed charges, due to limited incomes and having the Winter Fuel Allowance removed. Some respondents also reflect on the impact to their mental health.

Financial (socio economic)

- *“Another financial burden along with all the others to bare”.*
- *“Struggle to pay as it is”.*
- *“How do you expect people with communal bins to solve this problem? You take our tax but forget us, this is just one reason why most of us feel cheated and hate you”.*

- *“My green bin is shared with three other households , I would be prepared to pay one quarter of the charge, but I'm sure that the other three households would refuse.”*

Mental Health

- *“I've just retired extra cost would affect me mentally, worry about money”.*
- *“Mental wellbeing. This is wrong”.*
- *“Mentally, the stress of having to pay exorbitant council tax as it is and this additional cost just piles on top of all the other increases in living costs”.*

Disabilities

- *“As a disabled adult who is a carer for my child who is also disabled, I would not be able to dispose of my garden waste without paying an additional fee to a company. Please consider how this affects disabled and isolated families”.*
- *“Both my husband and I have health problems and would not be able to take garden waste to the tip”.*
- *“Health due to physical restrictions”.*

Elderly

- *“As a pensioner who tries their best to keep my garden tidy to give a better environment for all the Labour government has already taken my heating allowance so I would find it very difficult as I now have to find the money from somewhere”.*
- *“Being elderly, now a widow, greatly reduced amount of money available each week. Fuel payments gone, £200+ pa on fuel this Oct with another rise expected in Jan. all insurances now sky high. Can't find any more money”.*
- *“At 87 with poor health I already pay enough council tax”.*

9f. Other

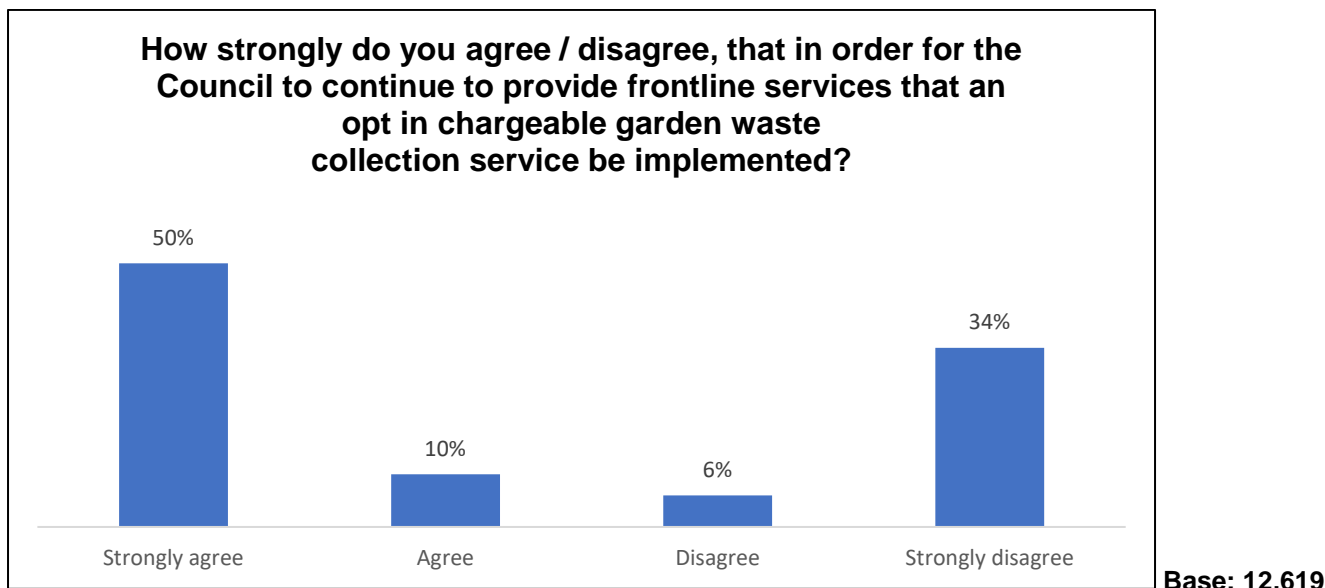
Other comments reflect frustration with the proposal, stating it as being a ‘*garden tax*’. Residents went on to outline their anger and annoyance with the increases, *“feel angry that council are introducing a garden tax”*.

Some stakeholders were so dissatisfied with the Council’s proposal that they would consider moving out of the borough to avoid paying the green waste charges, *“I would be looking to move away from the town”*. However, some residents did outline alternatives to disposing of green waste, rather than opting into the service change, this includes visiting recycling centres. Additional comments outline challenges with the consultation survey, *“this is a ridiculous survey”*.

10a. Overall

Whilst residents and stakeholders were provided with options of finding alternative ways to make the £1 million savings from within the Directorate, as well as suggest their own solutions; all respondents were provided with a final another opportunity to highlight whether the proposal to implement an opt-in chargeable green waste removal service, should be implemented in order for the Council to continue providing other frontline environmental and place-based services.

Of the 12,619 responses received, 60% agree with the statement that ‘in order for the Council to continue to provide frontline services, an opt-in chargeable garden waste service should be implemented’, whilst 40% disagree. However, it should be noted that respondents felt strongly that the questioning of the survey led them to being unable to disagree with statements.



10b. Additional comments about the proposal to introduce an annual charge for green waste collection services

All participants of the consultation were invited to make further comment, enabling the Directorate and Cabinet Members to understand how the proposal would fully impact the residents of Bolton, should the proposal be implemented in Spring 2025. 3,732 comments were received. These comments widely reflect the frustration of residents, with the sentiment to the proposal largely being negative. Comments were wide ranging and have been analysed and categorised into the following 17 themes.

Additional comments about the proposal to introduce an annual charge for green waste collection services		
Rank	Category	No. of respondents
a.	Council Tax & wider challenges with the proposal	1,728
b.	Current service delivery and the impact of impact of third party land	983
c.	Alternative options	836
d.	Reflections on Bolton Council / Councillors / National Government	555
e.	Increase in fly-tipping	465
f.	Socio-economic impact & other financial comparisons	379
g.	Don't agree	266

h.	Volunteers	258
i.	Food waste / Green bin	247
j.	Challenges with the survey design	222
k.	Environmental impacts, including burning	209
l.	Using alternative bins, including general waste	181
m.	Recycling centres / Composting	154
n.	Rewild / minimising gardens	119
o.	Additional protected groups & multi occupancy properties	110
p.	Mental health / lifestyles	50
q.	Agree	34

a. Council Tax & wider challenges with the proposal

1,728 comments were received by residents and stakeholders who remarked upon the correlation of green waste collection and the payment of Council Tax. Whilst some participants stated that their Council Tax payments should include the delivery of green waste collection services, others outlined that the variations in Council Tax banding already account for payments and therefore residents would be subject to double charges. Furthermore, a significant number of residents were infuriated by encompassing the proposal with Council Tax, highlighting that any suggestion to segregate those properties without gardens would lead to a notion of a 'pay as you go' service, with residents asking for a refund or to opt out of adult social care, educational services and cultural/leisure services. Residents felt by entwining the proposal with Council Tax brought into question the fundamental principle of collectively paying for statutory services, regardless of whether those services would be accessed at an individual level.

Additional comments challenged the proposal in its entirety, including questioning the income generated and the £1 million efficiency saving.

Council Tax includes the collection of green waste

- *"I think with the high level of council tax we pay already we should not have to pay extra for the occasional small collection of garden waste 4/5 times a year."*
- *"This should undoubtedly be covered by the extortionate council tax we pay (already with reduced bin collections) even if this means cuts in other areas."*
- *"The standard council tax which is paid now should cover the costs as it always has done."*
- *"All waste removal forms part of the council tax bill which is consistently increasing and is expensive. Threatening to cut other essential services in retaliation to resistance is not the answer."*

Variations in Council Tax banding accounts for service to properties with gardens

- *"Larger houses (more likely to be those with gardens) already pay more in council tax anyway."*
- *"The council tax band reflects this."*
- *"Higher tax band houses are paying more. They are not being subsidised."*
- *"Most houses with gardens will most likely pay more than others as a result of a % rise in council tax due to the banding."*

- *“Already pay council tax band D which should cover my green bin ridiculous trying to charge again, go back to the drawing board”.*
- *“As council tax bands vary depending on property type, the fact that some people don't have a garden and therefore don't use the service should already be accounted for in the amount of council tax they pay.”*

Challenging the fundamental principles of Council Tax

- *“We all pay Council Tax for services we don't personally use, but we are a community and must all share the cost of essential services, to be fair on everyone.”*
- *“I really object to this idea that it isn't fair for those people without a garden having to pay when they don't use the service - There are several council services I don't use, but accept that the cost is include”.*
- *“Paying CT currently means people are paying for services they never use or access, so you cannot in principle argue people with gardens should pay extra to people without a garden, otherwise, people should only pay a proportion of CT for they use or access.”*
- *“We don't have children does that mean I no long have to have my tax money going towards this as you are basically saying the same thing about people without gardens shouldn't pay for green waste. Double standards.”*
- *“To keep indicating that people with no gardens are paying for the service they are not using is ludicrous. We all pay for various services the council provide or have a duty to provide which we don't use, but we don't say the council shouldn't provide that service because we won't use it so shouldn't have to pay for it.”*
- *“All the environmental services referred to in this survey are fundamental and a minimum of the services we should expect to receive, to maintain our town and environment in exchange for the Council Tax we already pay. It should not be a trade off !!*

Proposal challenges

- *“If 80,000 households currently have garden waste collections (FAQ 22), a charge of £45 could raise £3.6 million if all paid the charge. Admittedly, there would be some who opt-out, but how do you justify the claim that “a charge of less than £45 per year wouldn't give us the savings of £1 million that we are looking to make”. This suggests a huge rate of opt-out (c.72%)”*
- *“£45 per house for 80,000 houses (your figures) equates to £3.6m. how do you arrive at an income of only £1m.”*
- *“£45pa returns over £3.5M (using the published figures for users of the service), if the planned return is £1M then this presumes 2 in 3 households will stop using the disposal system. I cannot believe that they will all take the refuse to the tip.”*

b. Current service delivery and the impact of third-party land

983 comments were received which highlight challenges with current service delivery, both of the collection of bins, as well as other frontline services. Service users highlight the frequency in which collections are missed, as well as the minimal delivery of services such as street cleansing and weed spraying.

Some stakeholders also reflected upon the challenges around the volume of green waste produced by third parties, particularly that from Council and housing association land.

Level of service delivery

- *“I do not think you are currently maintaining so called front line services adequately to start with.”*
- *“A lot of services are not being met at the moment grass not being cut properly.”*

- *“A lot of the options that are things the council alleged to do I can honestly say I’ve never seen them do (hedge trimmer and weed spraying). I could name numerous streets / paths that are council owned but overgrown.”*
- *“Even the council does not properly dispose of its green bin waste. Grass cuttings and leaf debris are left on the streets to blow around and to rot after council cuttings.”*
- *“Grass cutting is a joke, Farnworth cemetery is a disgrace we have to take our own lawn mowers and strimmers to cut grass round graves.”*
- *“Street bins are never emptied and if they are, bags are left on the streets for god knows how long, never seen a street cleaner, the streets are disgusting, never weeded. Local parks are also disgusting, used condoms, needles, glass and all sorts of rubbish left lying around. These things need to be prioritised over charging us more for collecting waste!!”*
- *“The council has not maintain their responsibility for grass cutting and weed spraying in many areas of Bolton. By your own admission we are already paying for frontline services that you are failing to deliver.”*
- *“Are you actually joking, the grass never get cuts or hedges trimmed in westhoughton, maybe once a year then left a mess, bins on the street also not emptied enough.”*

Third party land:

- *“A tree that is outside of my property on the road, that is NEVER pruned, managed by the council, currently a lot of my green bin waste is the leaves from the tree”.*
- *“I am overlooked by large trees which i might ad are the councils responsibility not the tenants and they are the bugbear of our lives the only solution is to collect all the leaves twigs and fallen bits of tree and put them back on the green.”*
- *“The majority of garden waste in my garden is from the overgrown trees, bushes and weeds the majority of which belong to both the council and Bolton at home. I will not pay for the disposal of garden waste that does not belong to me”.*
- *“I have several incredibly large trees that are on Bolton at Home land that are a couple of metres from my garden boundary. They are not pruned. Hence , each year i have a huge amount of leaves and twigs landing in my garden.”*
- *“Council put a tree preservation order on our trees and they produce huge amount of leaves which we collect to prevent footpaths from being slippy and drains becoming blocked.”*

c. Alternative options

836 respondents chose to use this question to suggest alternative solutions to the proposal or use the space to express that an alternative solution should be sort. Stakeholders commented extensively on green bins being used seasonally and therefore collections could be reviewed and reduced in the winter months. Mixed recycling (burgundy bins) was suggested as an alternative to making efficiency savings, moving to a monthly collection. Raising Council Tax to adequately fund services was also considered as a possible solution.

Other ideas include better enforcement of services, as well as reflection on the types of programmes invested in, including cultural. Better scrutiny of finances was also commented upon and a tightening up of priorities. Furthermore, salary levels and competency at senior management level were reflected on.

Changes to the frequency bins are collected; better enforcement; increases in Council Tax:

- *“Maybe they should reduce to monthly for green bins especially in the winter months”.*
- *“Garden waste does not need to be collected every 2 weeks especially over winter - trial a change in the frequency.”*
- *“Change the green bins to 4 weekly in the winter but bring back 2 weekly cardboard collections”.*

- *“Save money by asking/telling people to only put out bins when full. NOT all allowable bins every time however little is in them.”*
- *“Instead of paying an annual charge, reduce the frequency of service. The green bins rarely used out of season, why should I pay for an annual service that I use for less than half the year?”*
- *“Bring back fortnightly emptying of the beige (cardboard) bin and change the burgundy bin to monthly instead”.*
- *“My burgundy bin is half empty most collections. I would rather reduce the frequency”.*
- *“I don't know anyone who's burgundy bin is full every two weeks, so perhaps that could be reduced to once a month.”*
- *“Our cardboard bin could be emptied more, our red bin could be emptied much less frequently.”*
- *“A small increase in the basic council tax would be a more cost effective way of covering the deficit.”*
- *“Raise the taxes you need to make sure our town has the highest services it deserves. And cut waste in council spending.”*
- *“Maybe fines and enforcement for those creating litter would be a prevention rather than the current mess.”*
- *“If you need to make money start by fining people who park on double yellow lines. Those with 4 wheels on the pavement. Those who block pavements or drop curbs.”*
- *“Enforcement is a joke you have been given details frequently on fly tipping and done absolutely nothing about it”.*

Other alternatives, including finance management:

- *“Stop taking money from those who can't afford to pay is and take a good look inside the local council at wages, expense payments etc.”*
- *“Perhaps look at other ways money can be saved, maybe light only alternate street lamps on highways.”*
- *“Reduce salaries for the highly paid council management, remove redundant roles and sort the inefficiency.”*
- *“Why dont those at the top take a pay cut!”*
- *“You should be spending time investigating why we have far too many residents who either rack up debts on non payment of council tax, or the ones that use their own gardens as dumping grounds. Why not fine them to make.”*
- *“Collect what is due from NCP and the big builders before asking the working population for more.”*
- *“If the council needs to cut costs, stop building cycle lanes and wasting money on vanity projects.”*
- *“Stop funding ironman, pride, food festival etc. let the private sector pay for those.”*
- *“Libraries not needed. Cut them not services that actually matter.”*
- *“Close libraries aquarium and museum”.*
- *“Maybe a complete review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the whole council organisation would be more applicable and lead to greater cost savings!”*
- *“Better budgeting and stronger controls on finances as well as more robust scrutiny and not spending on unnecessary projects/ vanity projects would help rather than expecting residents to bail out the council!”*

d. Reflections on Bolton Council / Councillors / National Government

555 comments were received from residents and stakeholders that were generally frustrated with Bolton Council, ward councillors and MPs. Several comments also reflected annoyance with national Government. Irritations ranged from the way the organisation runs its services; the way budgets are managed; Town Centre challenges; and party politics.

- *“Unfortunately, the continued poor running of Bolton Council is the reason for the sorry state of finances.”*
- *“Just another way of ripping us off for your mismanaging. Not that this will matter”.*

- *"It's bad management of the council".*
- *"In my opinion local councils are no longer fit for purpose. The town is a disgrace. If you worked in the private sector you would be sacked!"*
- *"Is it Bolton is looking to just make MONEY because of their total incompetence in running services.*
- *"Why is your council so bad at managing money? Surely we are rich if we can afford to give NCP millions, charge £1 for land etc. Or is that only a service for the already rich, and the poor have to pay for everything?"*
- *"It's the Bolton council that wasting our money. On project that don't work. The town centre is a disgrace."*
- *"Bolton's Labour leadership seems intent on squeezing every last penny out of its citizens while delivering less and less in return."*
- *"It is a joke just like Bolton Council, write off NCP debts over a million, lend other councils money, then plead poverty and try and screw honest residents over with more charges."*
- *"It is very clear to me that you cannot manage a council budget you probably have no experience in running a business so you ask for more money it is no wonder councils go bankrupt"*
- *"BC are an utter disgrace and all their services have massively declined over the years. Bolton is a derelict dirty disgrace you need to improve all your services start by sacking these over paid bad decision makers."*
- *"Bolton council are appalling at the moment."*
- *"The councillors concerned in putting forward this proposal clearly take the residents of Bolton as idiots."*
- *"Labour are already unpopular after the winter fuel cuts, this now is nonsense"*
- *"Labour cannot keep hitting hard working people in the pockets while others idly sit about and don't contribute."*
- *"Labour Garden Tax. Absolutely ridiculous."*
- *"I will vote against any party or councillor who tries to implement this."*
- *"I'm losing faith with all parties in our council."*
- *"I feel this charge is a cut too far. I appreciate that it is driven by the last Tory government policies, but, between a Labour government and a Labour council you both seem to be trying to make yourself unelectable"*

e. Increase in fly-tipping

465 comments were received which reflected concerns with the potential for increased fly-tipping, particularly in areas that were already experiencing problems. Compared to the 'alternatives for disposing of waste', where residents highlighted intent for disposing green waste in various locations, this theme saw a shift to a concern in a rise in levels of fly-tipping. Stakeholders emphasised the additional cost this could have on the service, in having the administer reports and removal of fly-tipping.

- *"More material will be tipped along watercourses which will increase risk of flooding with consequent increase in cost in removal."*
- *"A charge will lead to an increase in fly tipping".*
- *"The admin cost alone and increase in fly tipping will easily outweigh any savings."*
- *"Bolton streets are already filthy a charge will lead to more fly tipping."*
- *"Adding a charge for green bin will automatically just make people fly tip more. Its already bad in my are for flytipping. I've reported load yet it's all still there and more is being added."*
- *"Already see people dumping waste inc grass cuttings into fields which can kill horses. More dumping on local open land will happen".*
- *"An inevitable consequence to the introduction of charges will be an increase in fly-tipping, which will only result in diverting those funds elsewhere".*
- *"Your going to encourage fly tipping of garden waste alongside the normal general waste across areas and then pay to enforce/clean-up operations of this."*

- *“You are creating a situation whereby fly-tipping would increase negating any savings on green bin collections”.*

f. Socio-economic impact & other financial comparisons

379 comments have been received which reflect concern around the socio-economic impact of the proposal if implemented. Residents and stakeholders outline the financial challenges this may have on residents from low-socio-economic backgrounds, who are already struggling in the current financial climate. Significant concern was raised around the impact to pensioners, who have already been impacted by the removal of the Winter Fuel Allowance and would be disproportionately impacted, as could struggle to physically take additional garden waste to recycle centres. Others are concerned about the possibility of increasing the charge annually.

Further comments made financial comparisons to other local authorities that had implemented the scheme, stating that charges were not proportionate across localities.

Socio-economic impact:

- *“There are many of us including myself on low wages!! It’s bad enough as it is paying the high council tax as it is”.*
- *“When your already paying full council tax as a single person on low wages! It’s hard... please cancel suggestions on this”.*
- *“I can’t help but felt this is an unnecessary financial burden on households that are already enduring crippling mortgage increase”.*
- *“Negative impact on low income earners, disabled and older people. Disgraceful.”*
- *“Council tax is at an all time high and with rumours that the 25% reduction for single occupancy may be abolished and the loss of winter fuel allowance makes things very hard financially for pensioners like myself who live alone with a fixed income.”*
- *“Adding extra charges to residents who are already stretched further than they should be through no fault of their own would be tantamount to theft, wrong, and frankly evil.”*
- *“Pensioners are once again being targeted as they are already living from hand to mouth. Disgusting proposal.”*
- *“Some of the more deprived areas will struggle to pay. I don’t agree with this at all.”*
- *“Disgusting way to treat elderly people who already struggle financially and probably have no alternative but the green bin.”*
- *“A lot of pensioners do not have cars to take items to the tip, and with a lot of them already suffering with winter fuel cuts, this is extra costs a lot won’t be able to afford”.*
- *“Disappointed with the extra charges being considered which would further put families in to more debt.”*
- *“Charge people who can afford it. Don’t penalise people whose only pleasure in their increasingly poverty stricken lives is their garden.”*
- *“In a time of austerity where more and more of our residents are using foodbanks to put food on the table. It might only be a minimal amount per week, but when your already on the breadline and counting pennies, deciding whether to eat or have the heating on paying to have a green bin emptied isn’t even on the radar never mind an option.”*

Increasing the charge annually:

- *“What is there to stop the charge rising in order to subsidise a shortfall in other services.”*
- *“More charges may increase.”*

- *“In addition what is £45 in year one proposal will be £50 in year two and so on. Therefore the financial burden on people will only increase!”*
- *“In addition what is £45 in year one proposal will be £50 in year two and so on. Therefore the financial burden on people will only increase!”*

Comparison to other local authorities:

- *“Many neighbouring councils in Greater Manchester collect garden and food waste weekly, including Salford, Manchester and Stockport. Their disposal charges through GMWDA are the same.”*
- *“I know that on the fylde coast its £10 a year for the green bin to be emptied and i think that is a much more realistic price.”*
- *“Trafford, probably the nearest for comparison charge £30 for first bin, £25 for each additional bin.”*
- *“£45 is excessive, higher than the £35 charged online by Trafford (25 for additional bins), or the £37.50 by Chorley, both of which include a bin initially if required. Stockport Council also provide a weekly garden waste collection for every address across the whole borough, maybe you could learn something from Stockport.”*

g. Don't agree

268 respondents outline their general disagreement with the proposal.

- *“This proposed charge is totally wrong.”*
- *“I feel the proposals are discriminatory and unworkable.”*
- *“This shouldn't be implemented.”*
- *“This proposal is ludicrous.”*
- *“I know other councils charge, but to move to charging is not in my view likely to bring about the desired result.”*
- *“I find it disgusting they are going to charge extra to remove garden waste.”*
- *“I am strongly against this.”*
- *“I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed charges for green bin collection services by our local authority.”*
- *“I don't agree with proposed charges.”*
- *“I strongly disagree with Labour's plan to charge an additional £45 to collect my garden waste!”*
- *“It is a preposterous, greedy idea!!”*

h. Volunteers

258 residents and stakeholders outline the role of community volunteers in the removal of waste and general upkeep of areas across the borough. Comments reflect the work these volunteers do and the contribution they make to their communities, often undertaking tasks which residents state should be done as part of their Council Tax payments.

Other comments reflect the cumulative impact of the proposal, resulting in an increase workload to volunteers due to the volume of fly-tipping and reluctance from residence to clear falling debris from Council land and flora and fauna on our highways. This could lead to a reduction in volunteering if residents and community groups are subjected to this additional charge.

The role of volunteers:

- *“It’s shocking that you’re claiming to be spending money on litter picking when the community seem to do the bulk of it”.*
- *“People are going round cleaning the streets for the council just for them to collect bags from pavements.”*
- *“It’s volunteers collecting litter.”*
- *“There are community groups trying to keep our streets clean and Not the council!”*
- *“I also cut council grass due to our neighbours adopting this and all litter picking in our area is by volunteers.”*
- *“Volunteers are picking litter and people are cutting council Land because the town looks a mess!”*
- *“I did 4 litter picks with Green Umbrella Community litter pickers and no one was paid. They were all volunteers, and elderly”.*
- *“The number of litter picking groups that volunteer to keep the streets tidy means that they council don’t pay as much as they claim for keeping out streets clean.”*
- *“I dont see much work on litter picking apart from volunteers, grave yards are being done by volunteers”.*

The cumulative impact to volunteers:

- *“Its not just my garden waste goes in to my green bin but the street also as myself and neighbours have no option but to maintain the street footpaths as the council seem to leave this.”*
- *“The other day I observed 2 of my neighbours sweeping up leaves from the street around their houses and putting it in their green bins if they had a charge on their bins I doubt they would do this public service.”*
- *“Currently many people maintain council owned areas voluntarily, grass cutting verges etc... this practice would stop, likley creating further demand on other services.”*

i. Food waste/green bin

247 comments were received by residents with regards to food waste/green bin. A significant number of respondents question why food waste and garden waste could not continue to be emptied at the same time. Residents also questioned how savings would be made, as the food waste would still need to be collected.

Green waste & food waste collection timetables:

- *“The fact that there will continue to be fortnightly food waste collections will still require the same number of waste lorry journeys to undertake the collections, and thus will not provide meaningful savings for the Council.”*
- *“You will still be collecting green bins with food waste in anyway, so no savings on the collections just emptier vehicles on the same routes.”*
- *“The green bin lorry would be going along streets anyway.”*
- *“If the green bins are emptied at the same frequency but only utilised for food waste, i fail to see how any money will be saved.”*
- *“I dont understand if the bin lorries are emptying the green bins anyway (food waste) how it saves money by not including garden waste. They are still doing their rounds. This should be explained.”*

Implementing and monitoring collections

Further comments were made about how the Council would implement and monitor the service, differentiating which residents had or hadn’t opted into the scheme. Respondents’ express concerns that the scheme could break down the relationships between neighbours, creating suspicion if bins had been used without consent.

Residents also expressed ambiguity with regards to bin collections and whether or not there would be a pause of payments/collections during the winter months, as there is less green waste. Stakeholders wanted to know how food waste would be collected for those who did not opt to have garden waste removed.

- *“How will you manage this ? It will be a logistical nightmare as your bin crew can't even read their sheets and see who is k. Assisted collection let alone read who has/hasn't paid for garden waste. As you have to dispose of food waste your crew will have to check every single green bin to check what it contains. This will cause extra work and the bin crew are getting the current collections wrong now !!!”*
- *“Or stickers on the bins may be stolen or they'll be disputes with people who pay but havent displayed their house number and the bins get mixed up or stickers peel off/ become weather worn.”*
- *“If a neighbour has a bin emptied containing garden waste and food and mine is emptied in the same van with just food why should it cost more money for the neighbour?”*
- *“how will you enforce other people putting their garden waste in my PAID FOR SERVICE bin, so that they can avoid the charge?”*
- *“What happens when garden waste is not produced in out of season. Why should we pay then. Also, how will you differentiate between if I use garden waste and food waste.”*
- *“Would the Green bin still be used for both food waste and garden waste? Your information states food waste if you already have a green bin but does not state if both food and garden waste can still be placed in the green bin.”*

Green bin or caddy

Some respondents state that they would like to have the choice to have a caddy or a green bin.

- *“I only had a small garden and the green bin takes up a lot of room so I would want you to take back my green bin and provide me with a food caddy instead.”*
- *“We have a large green bin but have hardly any garden waste. We would prefer to have a small caddy emptied weekly or fortnightly.”*
- *“So you will still collect food waste in caddies what will it cost to replace the green bins with caddies.”*
- *“For those like me who don't produce much garden waste but wouldn't want the food waste sitting around for months let us choose between a large green bin and a smaller bin/caddy.”*

j. Challenges with the survey design

222 respondents made comments with regards to the consultation. Residents expressed their anger and frustration with the survey design. These frustrations include, the survey being written in a biased way to get the answers the proposer wanted. Residents also express concern as to whether or not their opinions would be taken into account or if the proposal will still go ahead regardless of the responses.

- *“I have never read such a biased survey. I mean there will be a large number of residents who may have a garden, but yet have never had children, dont use libraries, don't use sports facilities, never have contact with social services, yet we all pay our fair share of council tax. This survey makes it sound like everyone wirth a garden is sponging off those who don't.”*
- *“This survey is even more absurd in its questions than the proposal itself. And for clarity, all questions proposed here ARE frontline services which we already PAY FOR. I do hope all comments are passed onto the appropriate decision makers. Utterly ridiculous and disgusting behaviour.”*
- *“Again a question framed in such a way that critical services need to be cut to pay for bin green bin collections.”*
- *“All of these questions are drliberately loaded to illicit the response you desire by depicting this charge as unavoidable.”*

- *“All these are loaded questions - giving us the illusion of choice - you already plan to do it but you’re giving us the hint of consultation.”*
- *“To be honest this consultation process is pointless as you have already suggested the change so more than likely you will not listen.”*
- *“These questioned are worded really biased aswell making people feel guilty that if they don't pay other things will stop!!”*
- *Sadly, I assume this "consultation" is an attempt to get some feedback and do it anyway.”*

k. Environmental impacts, including burning

209 respondents are concerned with the wider environmental impacts the proposal could have on the borough. Residents state that there could be an increase in the burning of garden waste, which could increase Co2 emissions. Further comments were made around the impact that burning could have on the borough’s climate change targets. Residents raised concerns that there could be more congestion at the recycling centres, which would also impact the environment.

- *“I would rather let my garden overgrow or burn the rubbish than pay anymore for what little collections we already have. Rise in Co2 emmissions.”*
- *“I will buy a bin and burn them well done bc more pollution.”*
- *“Concern re unintended consequences of the proposal and the effect on the environment, for example an increase in the burning of garden waste.”*
- *“Council should be encouraging people to grown own veg, wildlife gardens, green spaces to reduce air pollution and CO2. This will only mean less green spaces and more impact on climate change.”*
- *“Open fires that will effect boltons clean air, congestion at the recycling centres and further reduction in the towns appearance as people will be less inclined to garden.”*
- *“All that will happen is people will burn waste, going against the clean air targets for bolton and the wider area and the hard work by implementing zero emission buses and spending money on promoting electric vehicles to reduce emissions, especially in residential areas.”*
- *“Open fires that will effect boltons clean air, congestion at the recycling centres and further reduction in the towns appearance as people will be less inclined to garden.”*
- *“Burning of green waste creating acrid smoke.”*
- *“People will just burn it which is bad for the environment.”*
- *“Will the council stop people for burning garden waste and polluting the atmosphere.”*
- *“It completely undermines the Climate change strategy by discouraging the community from maintaining green spaces and protecting our environment.”*

l. Using alternative bins, including general waste

181 respondents state that they would not agree with the proposed additional costs for a green waste removal service and outline that they would rather dispose of their waste by using the general waste bins. Stakeholders suggest this would have a cumulative impact on environmental targets, specifically recycling and larger volumes of landfill. Residents also raise concerns that neighbours would use the bins of those that have opted to pay for the green bins.

- *“Without a green bin, more waste would be put into the black household waste bins - grass cuttings, weeding etc. How will you stop this?”*
- *“People will just put food waste in the black bins etc which in turn makes recycling a joke.”*
- *“By implementing the following it will just inact negatively on the environment because waste will be being disposed of incorrectly.”*
- *“Or they will anominously stick it in bins that have not opted out.”*

- *“We already find that other people deposit their waste in our bins on collection day and this is likely to increase if a charge is implemented.”*
- *“You spent years encouraging people to recycle then cut there bins. Every year the bins get smaller or are emptied less frequently.”*
- *“You reduced the size of Grey waste bins in 2009, causing my family of 5 with a young baby to struggle managing waste.”*
- *“I shll cease recycling totally, leave plastic waste in backings and put everything in grey bin.”*

m. Recycling centres / Composting

154 respondents made comments regarding the recycling centres. Respondents raised concerns that the current restrictions in place limit the number of times residents can visit the recycling centre. Additionally, residents wanted to know if the restrictions would be changed to allow for more visits to the site. Respondents also suggest alternative solutions, which included selling the compost to create additional revenue for the Council.

- *“If we had to take waste to the tip would this be within our allowance of tip runs ?”*
- *“The restrictions on the use of public waste recycling centres has had the effect of even more waste being tipped indiscriminately;”*
- *“In addition, the closure of the Blackrod recycling centre some years ago means travel from this area to the main centre could add lots more travel and pollution, with people who will not pay. Also there are restrictions on how many times you can visit in a year.”*
- *I perceive garden waste will be flytipped*
- *“not everyone has or can afford a car to take to tip.”*
- *“What are elderly residents without a vehicle who cannot take their waste to a tip going to do?”*
- *“People may not drive, be disabled, elderly that use a gardener, so wouldn't be able to take the garden waste to recycle centres.”*
- *“It widens inequalities if people cannot afford to pay for it or they cant afford to buy or rent a vehicle to transport it to the tip.”*
- *“Maybe an introduction of local compost areas would help rather than a tip run. Bring back some community spirit.”*
- *“Compost could be used on council gardens and for new builds instead of buying top soil.”*
- *“Council can make money out of composting and sell compost on for agricultural needs / other purposes and would then pay for itself and the collection service.”*

n. Rewild/minimising garden

119 respondents state that the proposal could resort in residents minimising or removing their gardens. Stakeholders raise concerns that if gardens were removed that this could have several cumulative impacts including; an adverse effect on the environment, including wildlife; an increased risk in flooding; neighbourhoods could be left unkept and there could be an increase in anti-social behaviour.

- *“You are merely encouraging the destruction of green spaces and killing the environment.”*
- *“You want everyone to go green and have flowers and grass in their gardens to encourage bees and wildlife but this is not encouraging people to have or look after their gardens. People will go concrete and fake grass or just let their gardens grow and look a mess!”*
- *“It will have a detrimental impact on biodiversity with many gardens becoming urbanised.”*
- *“You're just encouraging people to pave over their gardens and increase flood risk. It's bad enough in Horwich as it is.”*
- *“People will pave over gardens destroying our climate.”*

o. Additional protected groups and multi occupancy properties

110 respondents state that the proposal could have a direct impact on either themselves or residents who have a protected characteristic. Comments regarding protected characteristics also appear in other thematic characteristics, however these specifically refer to particular groups.

Residents raise concerns that the proposal could specifically impact the elderly, who have already been subject to other national cuts. Disabled residents could also be impacted by this proposal and subjected to further financial costs, when they are already disproportionately impacted by the economic climate. Ambiguity was also raised by residents who reside in multiple occupancy accommodation and social housing. These residents were unsure how the proposal would be implemented in these settings.

- *“Pensioners now cant afford to heat their properties and will have to choose between heating and eating, they do not need the added pressure of finding more money to pay out.”*
- *“£45 , way too high especially for single pensioners with the current cost of living crisis.”*
- *“Penalising those who have worked hard to have a garden, like the elderly and Working class who are always punished for just living.”*
- *“As usual pensioners will be penalised.”*
- *“Negative impact on low income earners, disabled and older people. Disgraceful.”*
- *“I for one won’t be paying any charges as I’m disabled and on benefits because of that so can’t afford any more outgoings.”*
- *“Is it how would this cover flats in communal gardens or even just flats that had food waste??”*
- *“8 flats here. One huge garden.”*
- *“Also how do the council ensure that people who do not have a garden and live in flats with communal bins ensure ALL occupants use the correct bins because these bins will need further recycling will they pay more in council tax?”*

p. Mental health / lifestyles

50 respondents state that gardens provide a positive lifestyle for many residents, with gardens encouraging people to exercise. Inadvertently, the removal of gardens could also have an impact on residents’ mental health.

- *“Gardens keep us fit and sane take that from us we might as well not exist.”*
- *“Doing the garden is a hobby and is exercise.”*
- *“People need to be encouraged to have green spaces in their gardens for environment, mental health etc.”*
- *“This would help mental health, well being and foster community spirit . An improvement in well being will decrease the demand on mental health services.”*
- *Gardening is good exercise; even being prescribed through social prescribing. If you deny people this therapeutic activity what would be the knock on consequence for people's health etc.”*

q. Agree

Few respondents (34) state that they would agree to the proposal on the condition that the front-line services would not be reduced and delivery would be optimal, with no missed collections. Some residents understood that efficiencies needed to be made.

- “Good idea to charge for garden waste if it means front line services are not affected as we are all affected if streets are not cleaned /environmental services weeding not kept on top of.”
- “I am prepared to pay £45 if, by doing so, I can protect other vital services.”
- “I reluctantly agree if it avoids further cuts in services.”
- “Need to be inline with the rest of the country.”
- “With the difficult financial situation the council finds itself in, it’s about time us people with gardens paid for the service only we receive.”

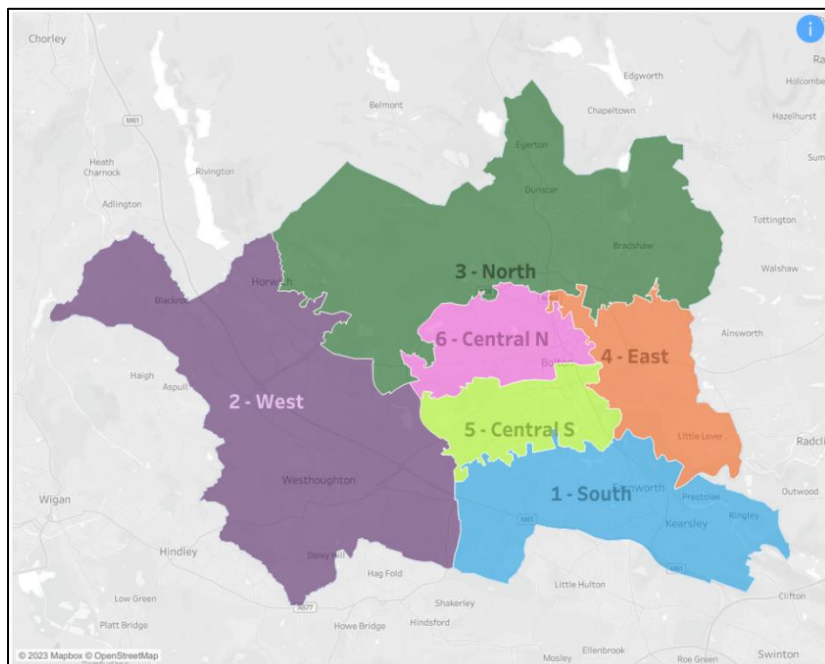
11. Stakeholder demographics

All stakeholders responding to the consultation were asked to provide their demographic information, enabling the team to monitor engagement and ensure that the responses reflect the diversity of the borough.

11a. Geographical reach

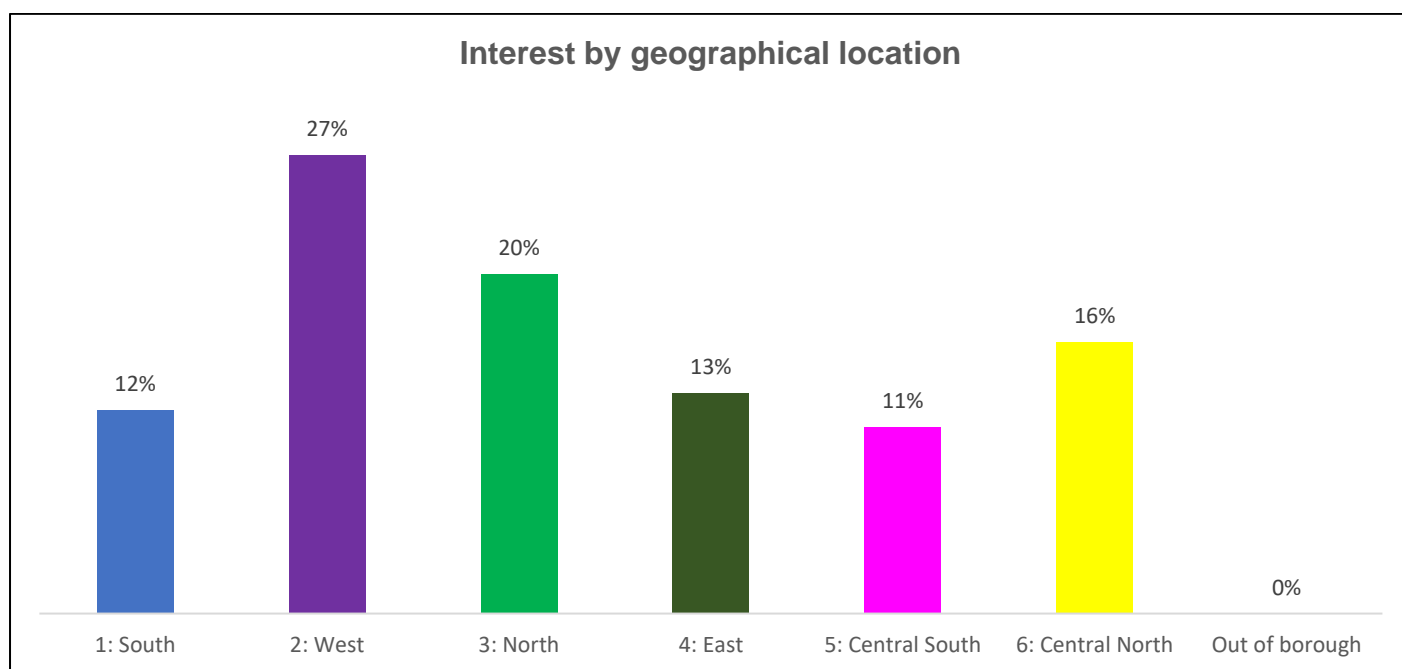
The graph below outlines the demographics of respondents by geographical neighbourhood. A total of 5,314 respondents provided their full postcode to this optional question. Of those stakeholders that provided their full postcode, 5,289 live in the borough of Bolton. Residents in the West of the borough made up the largest group of respondents (27%); followed by residents in the North of the borough (21%). Residents in the South of the borough (12%) and Central South (11%) make up the fewest number of responses. A breakdown by ward is outlined in the table below.

Of stakeholders responding from outside of the borough (0% / 19 stakeholders), 13 are from Greater Manchester, 5 are from Lancashire and 2 are from other parts of the country.



*Neighbourhoods are a local geography for integrated health and social care; all have a population of around 50,000 residents.

Interest by geographical location



Base: 5,308

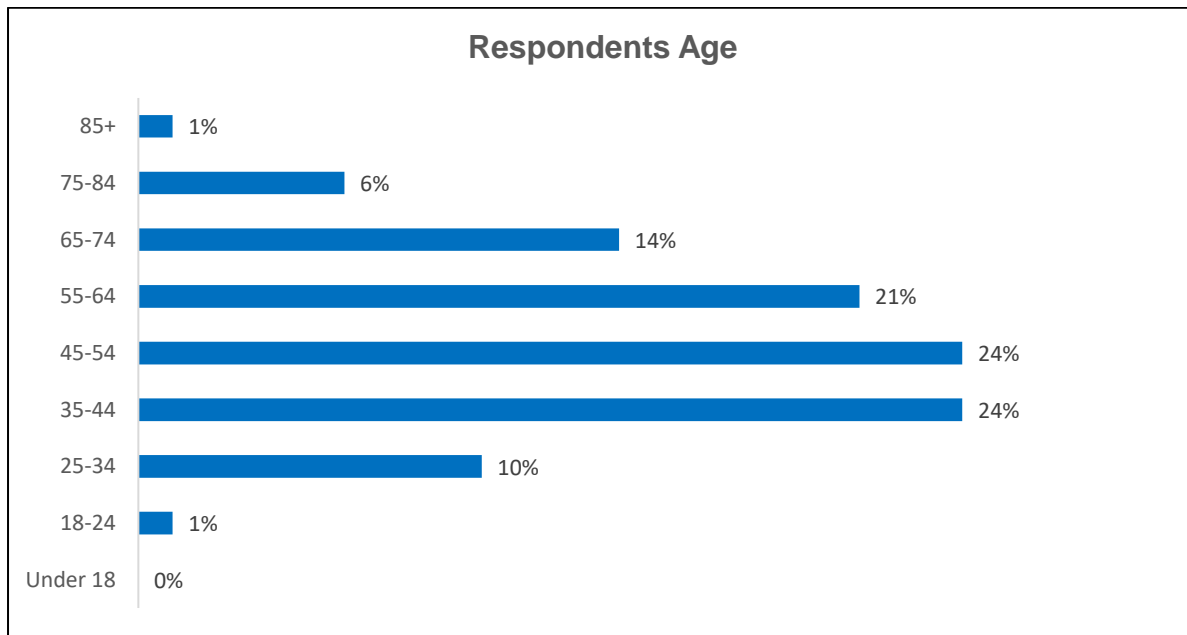
Ward	No of responses
Astley Bridge	335
Bradshaw	306
Brightmet	252
Bromley Cross	360
Farnworth North	204
Farnworth South	190
Great Lever	121
Halliwell	126
Heaton, Lostock & Chew Moor	464
Horwich North	417
Horwich South & Blackrod	294
Hulton	283
Kearsley	180
Little Lever & Darcy Lever	282
Queens Park & Central	216
Rumworth	132
Smithills	306
Tonge with the Haulgh	196
Westhoughton North & Hunger Hill	312
Westhoughton South	313

11b. Gender

5,706 responses were received providing the respondent's gender. 56% respondents' identity as being female, 41% as male and 3% of respondents identified as 'other'.

11c. Age

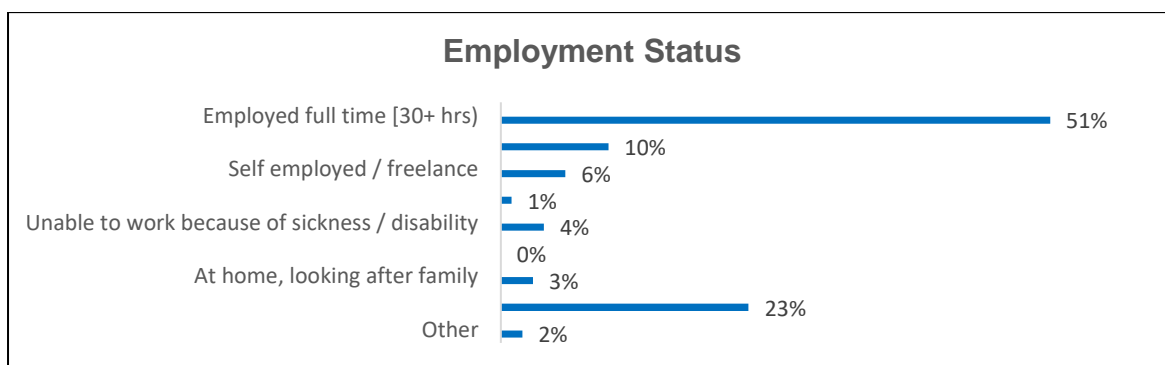
Responses were received from individuals in all age categories (5,771 responses). 1% (62 respondents) are under the age of 24 years. 79% of respondents are aged between 25 – 64 years. 21% of responses were received from individuals above the age of 65 years.



Base: 5,771

11d. Employment Status

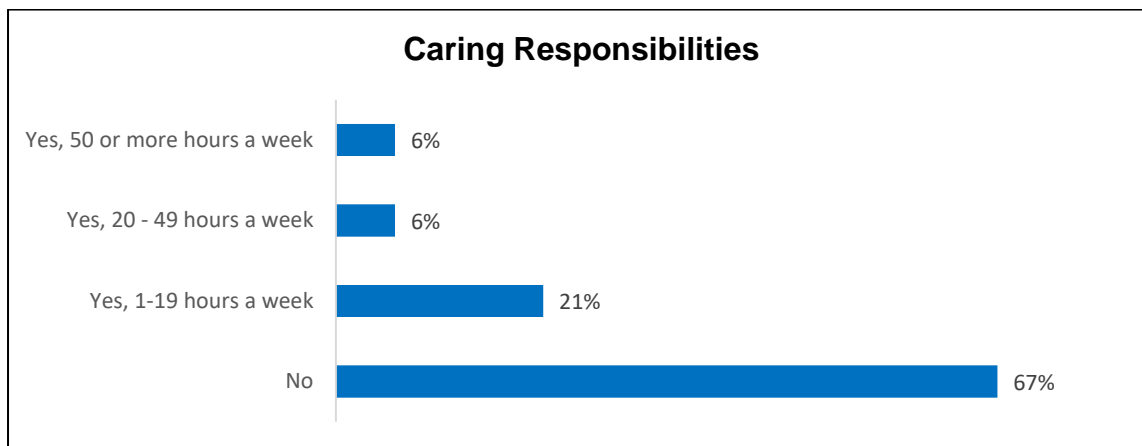
5,808 responses were received providing the stakeholders employment status. 67% of the responses received were from individuals in some form of employment. 23% of respondents are retirees. 1% of respondents are currently unemployed, but are available for work, and 4% of respondents are unable to work due to sickness or a disability. 3% of respondents stay at home to look after a family member. 2% (115 respondents) stated 'other', this includes individuals that undertake shift work / term-time only work; unpaid carers; individuals that have multiple roles; asylum seekers; people with disabilities and volunteers.



Base: 5,835

11e. Caring Status

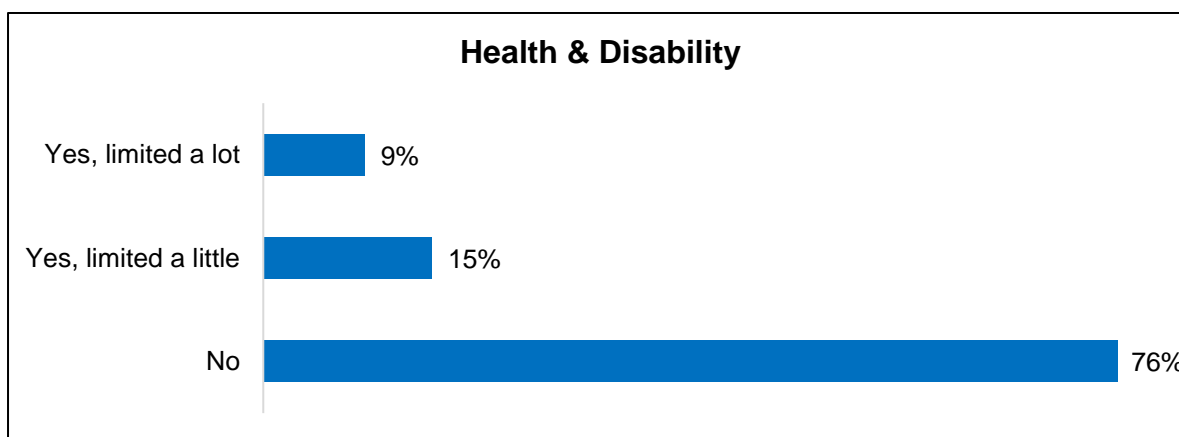
Respondents were asked whether they provide any care or support to individuals with long term physical and mental health difficulties. 5,591 stakeholders engaged with this question, with one-third of the individuals stating they have a caring responsibility (33%). 67% don't have any form of caring responsibility.



Base: 5,591

11f. Health & Disability Status

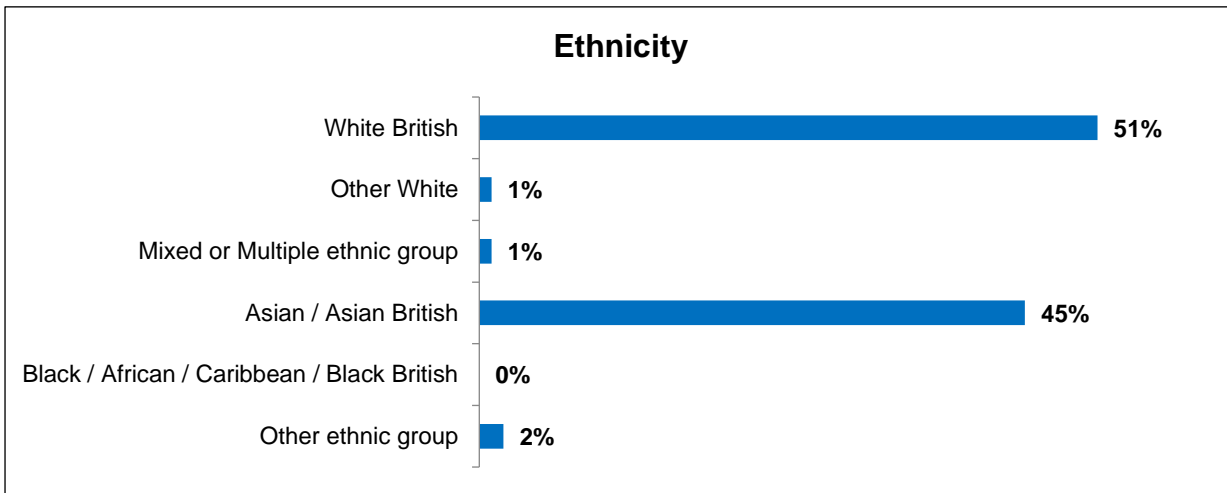
5,658 stakeholders highlight whether their day-to-day activities are impacted by a long term physical or mental health condition. Of the 5,658 responses received, nearly one-quarter (24%) are impacted by a long-term health or disability condition.



Base: 5,658

11f. Ethnicity

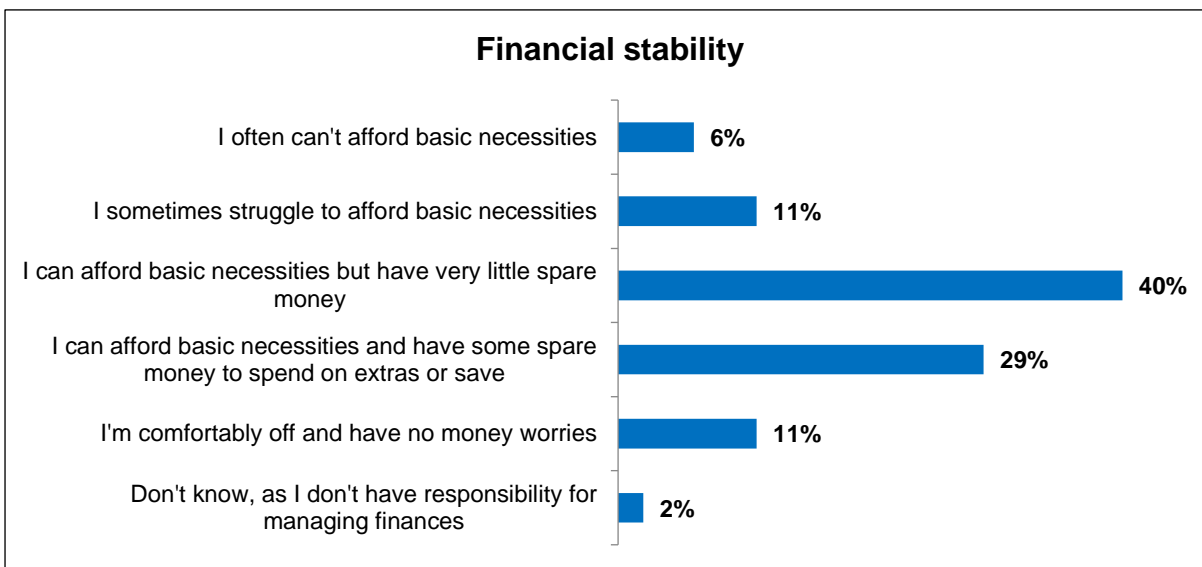
8,822 respondents provided their ethnicity when undertaking the consultation. 51% report as being white – British. 49% report as being from other ethnically diverse communities, this includes 45% from the Asian / Asian British community.



Base: 8,822

11g. Financial stability

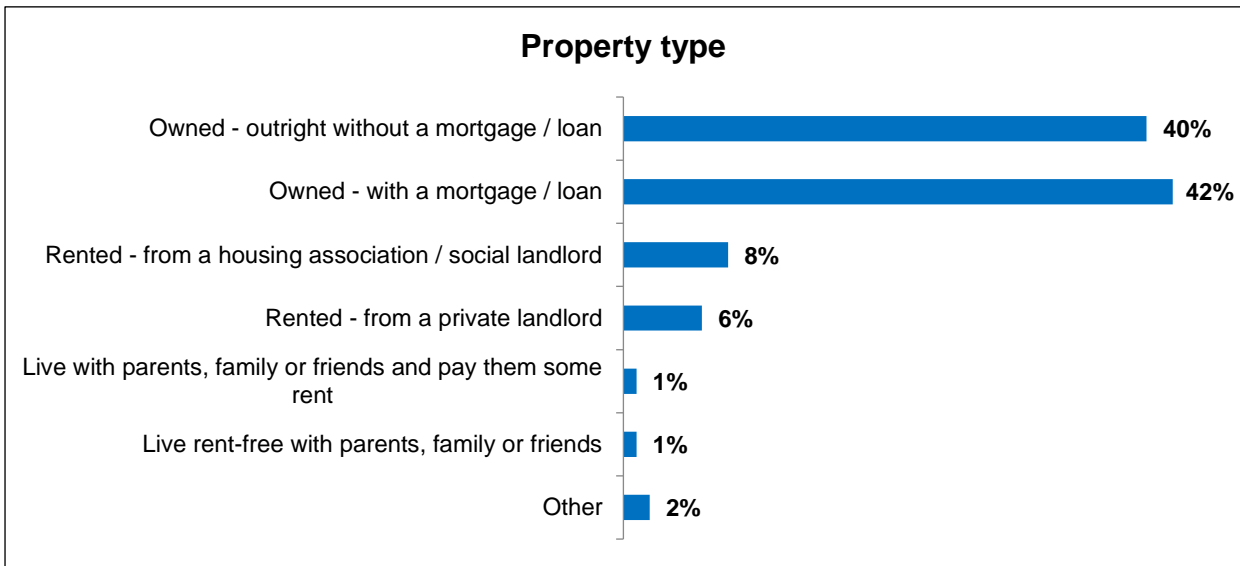
5,466 respondents outlined their financial status, enabling us to gauge the impact of the cost of living on residents. Of those responding, 40% stated they 'can afford basic necessities, but have very little spare money'; and 29% stated they 'can afford basic necessities and have some spare money to spend on extras or save'. 17% stated they often or sometimes struggle to afford basic necessities.



Base: 5,466

11h. Property type

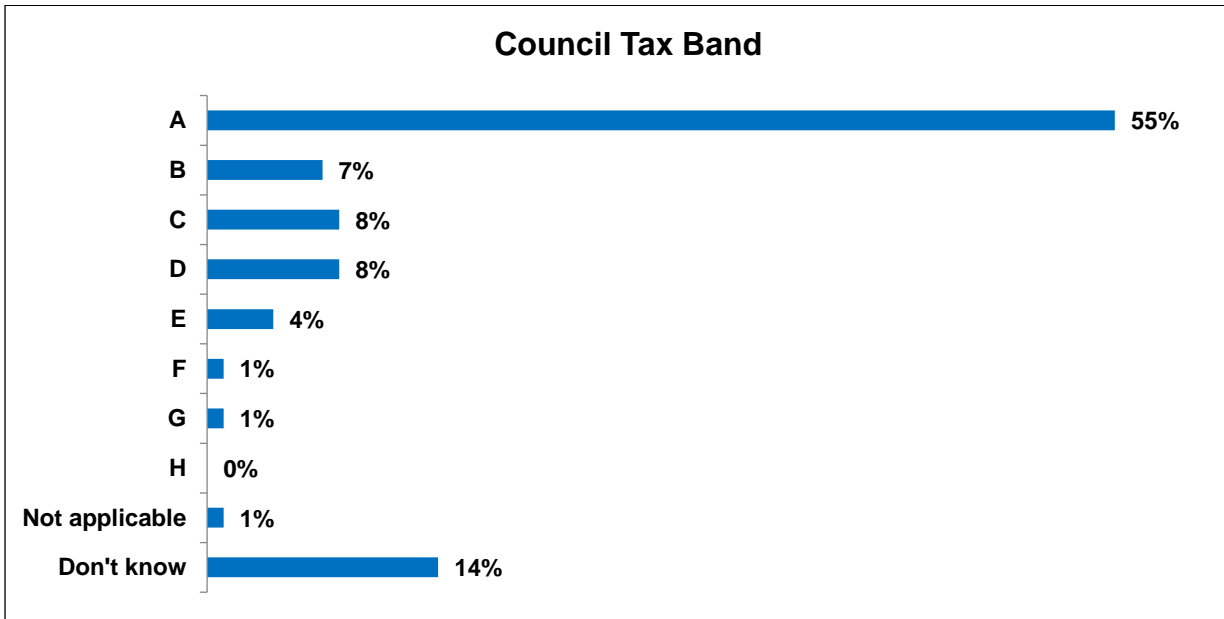
All respondents were asked to reflect on the type of property they live in. 5,564 responses were received. 42% of residents own their property with a mortgage or loan. 40% own their property outright. 14% rent their property, either privately or via a social housing provider or landlord. 2% live with family or friends. Of the 2% stating 'other', 2 responses outlined shared ownership.



Base: 5,564

11i. Council Tax banding

Residents and stakeholders were asked to provide their Council Tax banding. Of the 10,173 number of responses received, 62% of respondents live in properties in banding A and B. 16% live in properties which are in bands C and D. The remaining 6% live in properties that are bands E – H.



Base: 10,173

12. Consultation summary

Between 7th October and 4th November 2024, Bolton Council ran a public consultation, seeking to engage residents and stakeholders that have a garden, in sharing their reflections on a proposal for a chargeable garden waste removal service. 12,878 residents and stakeholder participated in the consultation, with overall sentiment being negative and challenging of the proposal.

All stakeholders were invited to share their initial views of the proposal. When asked if households which do not have gardens should continue to contribute to garden waste removal as part of their Council Tax payments, 69% stated no. 57% felt that Council Tax should only be spent on frontline services, and 37% stated it should be spent of both frontline services and garden waste removal.

All participants were asked to reflect on the proposed charging model, of a £45 annual charge for the removal of each garden waste bin. 55% agreed with the proposed annual fee, however, 43% stated it should be included in the cost of Council Tax.

Of the 42% of respondents that currently have a green wheeled bin, 90% stated they wouldn't opt into a chargeable waste removal scheme. Of the 8% that would, 88% stated they would prefer to pay less than the £45 proposed fee. For the 3% of respondents requiring an additional bin, 60% stated they would want to pay less than the £45 proposed.

Those residents impacted by the proposal were asked whether they would be able to access a digital, sign-up, service. 87% felt confident in a digital service, with 9% stating this would be a barrier and they wouldn't subscribe to the scheme. 91% also felt confident in being able to set up a Direct Debit payment, with 5% stating they would need support and 1% stating they don't have a current account to engage in the proposal.

Residents that are less likely to engage in the proposed service were asked how they would dispose of their waste. 28% stated they would likely take it to a house-hold waste and recycle centre and 11% would compost it. Overwhelmingly, 55% suggested they would do something else with it, including using existing household waste collections (namely general waste). Some residents said they would dispose of their green waste on alternative sites, including fields, farmland, woodland and urban sites. Other residents stated they would burn their waste. (Further suggestions are outlined in the full report).

All stakeholders were asked to consider alternative measures for making the £1 million saving. Of the possible Place based service areas that could be identified for efficiency savings, residents felt that mixed recycling (burgundy bins) could be emptied less frequently (17%). Overwhelmingly, 67% stated that there were no alternatives for charging for green waste removal. 10% of stakeholders (1,196) were invited to expand on their answer and offer further alternatives. The top three areas identified for making savings include making Council wide savings (including redundancies); frustration with Councillor salaries; and remarking upon significant dissatisfaction with current service delivery across the organisation.

All residents and stakeholders were asked to reflect upon the potential impact of the proposal, with 56% stating that they would be financially impacted, however, think it's right to implement the charge. However, it should be noted that one-fifth (20%) stated they couldn't afford the payment if introduced.

5% of respondents went on to say how they would be impacted. Again, residents used this space to highlight their dissatisfaction with Bolton Council and the reduced or absent services that should be being delivered as part of Council Tax payments. Others described the wider environmental impacts, as well as the proposal leading to an increase in general waste. The impact to protected groups was also raised, specifically the socio-economic impacts to families on low incomes; older people who no longer receive Winter Fuel Payments and are not able to access recycle centres easily; as well as those residents who are disabled. Residents living in social housing and communal residencies were also seen to be disproportionately impacted by the proposal.

Overall, 60% agree with the statement that *'in order for the Council to continue to provide frontline services, an opt-in chargeable waste service should be implemented'*. However, it should be noted that respondents felt strongly that the questioning throughout the survey led them to not being able to disagree fully with statements. 3,732 individuals went on to comment further on the overall proposal. The top three themes remarked upon the rationale for correlating the proposal with the payment of Council Tax. Some residents felt strongly that payments are already included in Council Tax, whilst others remarked upon the differentiation in Council Tax banding, resulting in double payments. Others felt passionately that the proposal brought into question the fundamental principle of paying for collective statutory duties.

Other significant areas of reflection were around the lack of service delivery and the impact of waste by third parties (falling flora and fauna from Council land, highways, housing associations and neighbouring properties).

Residents and stakeholders also highlighted further alternatives in this field, including reducing the frequency of green waste collections and introducing a seasonal delivery model. Others suggested reducing the frequency of mixed recycling, moving to a monthly collection. Other suggestions included having better financial planning and monitoring.

Only 34 respondents chose to use this space to agree, in principle, with the proposal, so long as a guaranteed service could be delivered.

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposal to introduce an annual charge for collecting garden waste

To help explain why the chargeable garden waste service changes are being proposed and how it will work, please read our frequently asked questions below.

1. What is garden waste?

Garden waste includes grass clippings, weeds, dead flowers, old plants, dried leaves and twigs.

2. How is garden waste collected?

Households are provided with a green wheeled bin which is emptied every two weeks throughout the year. Currently, there is no separate charge for this service.

3. What changes are you proposing?

Bolton Council is consulting on a proposal to start charging an annual fee from Spring 2025 to households who chose to use our garden waste bin collection service.

4. Why are you proposing this change?

Due to the continued financial challenges and the need to deliver a balanced budget, we are required to contribute £1 million towards the Council's ongoing savings objectives. We are therefore proposing that from Spring 2025, we'll start charging households who want us to collect their garden waste.

5. If the proposal was brought in, what would it mean for people who have a green wheeled bin for garden and food waste?

It would mean that those who want their garden waste collecting would have to pay an annual charge from April 2025, so that those who use the service contribute directly towards the cost of collecting their garden waste. Green bins could still be used for food waste and will not be impacted by the proposal.

6. How would a chargeable green garden waste service work?

Stickers on bins would be used to indicate which households are subscribed to the chargeable garden waste collection service. Households that do not subscribe will only be able to use their green wheeled bin for fortnightly food waste collections. If householders continue to use it for garden waste without subscribing, the wheeled bin would be removed and replaced with a small 23-litre green food caddy. The refuse collection vehicle will also have a digital record of properties that have paid for a subscription.

7. Are you going to start charging for collecting food waste? Or bring in charges for emptying other household bins / containers?

No, the government only allows us to charge for emptying garden waste bins.

8. How would people sign up to a chargeable garden waste service?

Sign-up would be online, in advance for the year, by card or by creating an annual direct debit.

Help would be offered to anyone who wanted to subscribe but couldn't complete the form themselves.

To avoid excessive admin and other service costs, subscribers would pay the full annual fee no matter when they signed up in the year.

9. I'd like to subscribe but can't do it online.

If you can't subscribe online, you will be able to ring or call into our One Stop Shop, who can complete the form for you. Your local library or UCAN centre may also be able to help.

10. Can I pay by instalments / cash / PayPal / ApplePay etc?

We offer two payment options. Residents can either make an online payment for the first year, or setup annual direct debit payments online. All payments have to be made in advance for the year.

11. I currently have a green wheeled bin. If you introduce a charge for collecting garden waste and I don't subscribe, what will happen?

Your green wheeled bin can be used for food waste, which will be collected free of charge. Any green bin presented containing garden waste and without a valid subscription will not be collected and the resident will be required to remove the waste or subscribe before the green bin can be emptied.

12. Will my collection day change if I sign up? / Would it change if I decide not to sign up? / Will the collection frequency change?

No, your collection day will stay the same as it is now. Your green bin will continue to be collected every two weeks throughout the year, with the exception of the Christmas holiday season when we tend to have an interruption to services.

13. Can charities, voluntary groups or places of worship have a free garden waste collection service?

No, at this point in time, we cannot offer the service for free to such groups.

14. I have a lot of garden waste, could I have an extra bin?

Yes, households could have the option to subscribe for more than one green bin. Each bin would be subject to an individual annual subscription. You'd also have to pay a one-off charge for any extra bins to be delivered. The amount you might have to pay is part of the consultation proposal.

15. I don't have a lot of garden waste; can I pay less for a smaller garden waste bin / for a less frequent collection?

No, everyone who signs up would pay the same annual charge. It would be too complicated and unmanageable to have different levels of service.

16. If I pay for the service, can I have a lockable bin to stop other people adding their waste on collection day?

Unfortunately, we are not able to provide lockable bins.

17. If I pay for the service what happens if someone steals the sticker off my bin?

The stickers will be very difficult to remove. In addition, our in-cab system will tell us which properties have subscribed. The labels will have the address on so cannot be easily transferred between properties.

18. If the proposal is brought in and I don't want to subscribe, what can I do with my garden waste?

The best option would be to compost at home. Subsidised bins are available through Bolton Council <https://www.bolton.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/composting>. Households could also take garden waste to one of [Bolton's Household Waste Recycling Centres](#) on Salford Road or Raikes Lane without charge. You could also make your own arrangements with a neighbour to share a green bin and share the cost.

19. Why don't you just take the green wheeled bins off people who don't subscribe, and give them a food caddy instead to save messing about with stickers and inspections?

This would increase the cost of the service. Also, if householders change their minds at a later date and decide to subscribe, they would need to pay the delivery and admin fee to have a green bin delivered.

20. If I don't want to subscribe, can you take my green bin away and give me a caddy?

No, we do not have the resources to do this.

21. If I don't subscribe why won't my food waste be collected weekly?

Only one-third of households in Bolton have a small food waste caddy collected weekly. We do not have the resources to increase the collection schedule for thousands of households.

22. How many households have a garden waste collection service?

Over 80,000 households in our borough currently receive a garden waste collection service. There are over 128,000 households in Bolton.

23. Instead of charging, why not just collect garden waste less often? You could collect monthly rather than fortnightly, or for less months of the year?

Unfortunately, a less frequent collection of garden waste would not make the savings needed. In addition, please remember we collect food waste in the same bins - we would not want to leave decomposing food waste for longer than 2 weeks.

24. Can I have an assisted bin collection if the chargeable service is introduced?

The assisted bin collection is for residents who can't put their bins out themselves and have no-one to help them. If you're already on an assisted bin collection you don't need to do anything, this will carry on. If you're not already on the assisted bin service, please visit our website to see if you are eligible:

<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling/assisted-bin-collection>

25. What happens to the money you make from selling composted waste?

Any income gained by selling the compost product helps to bring down the cost of the wider waste disposal contract.

26. Charging will just encourage fly tipping won't it?

We have discussed this with other local authorities that have been operating a chargeable garden waste collection for a number of years. There is no evidence of an increase to fly tipping directly resulting from a chargeable garden waste collection service.

27. Why should I have to pay when I already pay Council Tax and get very little for my money?

Currently, one-third of Bolton households do not have a garden and they are making a contribution to this service as part of their council tax.

28. People with big gardens probably pay more Council Tax than many other householders. How is charging for garden waste fair?

Council Tax covers a wide array of services across the Council and is not just to fund bin collections. Currently, one-third of Bolton households do not have a garden and they are making a contribution to this service as part of their council tax. Due to the continued financial challenges and the need to deliver a balanced budget, we are required to contribute £1 million towards the Council's ongoing savings objectives.

Consultation on a proposal to start charging for Bolton Council's garden waste service

Consultation closes on 4th November 2024

Bolton Council provides a garden waste collection service for over 80,000 residential properties with a green wheeled bin.

Garden waste such as grass cuttings, tree and shrub pruning, dead flowers and weeds are collected free of charge every two weeks.

We're now consulting on a proposal to start charging for the collection of garden waste, and would like your views.

Information about the proposal is outlined within the questionnaire, and you can read our Frequently Asked Questions and other background information for more detail:

www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195

Your views will be considered alongside other information to help Bolton Council decide whether to go ahead with the proposal to start charging for our garden waste service or not.

Your response - keeping your data safe

Most questions are optional; just miss out any that you don't want to answer.

The results of this consultation may be made public. If you're responding as an individual you won't be identified in any report as your responses will be anonymised and grouped with those from other people. If you're responding in an official capacity your response may be published but no personal details will be included.

Any personal data you provide will be held securely, in line with our retention schedule and privacy policy:

www.bolton.gov.uk/data-protection-freedom-information/privacy-notices

We use Snap Surveys professional software to collect and process your data. Snap Surveys Ltd. follow the UK General Data Protection Regulation, and their privacy policy can be found by following this link:

www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/privacy-policy-uk/

Charging proposal

We're proposing to introduce an annual charge for collecting garden waste [such as grass cuttings, tree and shrub prunings, dead flowers and weeds] from green wheeled bins.

If the proposal goes ahead, any household that is eligible for a green wheeled bin for garden waste could pay an annual charge to have their garden waste collected by Bolton Council. The bin could continue to be used for food waste free of charge.

Collections would take place every two weeks, and the collection day wouldn't change.

Please look at our Frequently asked questions and other background documents for more information about the proposal.

www.bolton.gov.uk/directory/13/consultations/category/195

Initial Views

Should households, which do not have gardens, continue to contribute to the garden waste removal service as part of their Council Tax for households which do have gardens?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Whilst Environmental Services have been asked to contribute towards savings of £1million from 2025/26, there are always alternatives.

Environmental Services could reduce the frequency of other waste collection, cut down on maintenance [such as street cleansing, grass / hedge cutting], reduce environmental enforcement [such as fining or prosecuting people who drop litter, fly tip, don't pick up dog fouling, abandon vehicles, graffiti, urinate in public places or dump commercial waste].

Whilst legislation does not allow us to charge for emptying other household bins, charges could be introduced or increased for other council services, Council Tax could rise, or we could look to increase other income such as commercial income and sponsorship of refuse vehicles.

Should your Council Tax continue to be spent on vital frontline services such as street cleansing; litter picking; grass cutting; weed spraying; environmental enforcement; emptying litter bins, or should it be spent on garden waste removal services for those households which have gardens?

- Council Tax should only be spent on vital frontline services
- Council Tax should be spent on both front line services and garden waste removal
- Council Tax should be spent on garden waste removal for households which have gardens
- Don't know

If the proposal to charge for the garden waste collection service went ahead there are a number of options about what to charge to empty each green bin.

Whilst most households would only need one garden waste bin, there would be an option to pay extra to have a second green wheelie bin.

Our preferred option would be an annual charge of £45 for the first bin and £45 for anyone wanting a second green wheelie bin, but we'd like your views.

How much, if anything, do you think we should charge each year for collecting garden waste in a green wheeled bin?

- Annual charge of £45 for first bin, less for second bin
- Annual charge £45 for each bin
- Annual charge £45 for first bin, more for second bin
- Charge a different amount (please state how much in the box below)
- Nothing, this should be part of Council Tax
- No opinion

How much should we charge?

Current service use

Which type of green bin do you currently use?

- Large green wheeled bin for garden & food waste
- Small green caddy for food waste (Please go to 'Alternatives' questions)
- Neither (Please go to 'Alternatives' questions)

Future use

If the proposal to start charging for the collection of garden waste goes ahead, we are proposing that the annual charge would be at least £45 for each green bin. This works out at £1.80 per collection, based on 25 collections a year.

Any charge is part of the consultation and hasn't been decided yet. However a charge of less than £45 per year wouldn't give us the savings of £1 million that we are looking to make.

Would you be prepared to pay if an annual charge was introduced for collecting garden waste?

You will be asked how much you would be prepared to pay later.

- Yes for one bin
- Yes, for two bins
- Yes, for more than two bins
- No, I wouldn't pay
- No opinion

If the proposal went ahead, how likely / unlikely would you be to use our chargeable garden waste collection service for **ONE** green wheeled bin?

	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely	No opinion
Annual charge of less than £45	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual charge of £45	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual charge of more than £45	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please say how much you would be prepared to pay

If the proposal went ahead, how likely / unlikely would you be to use our chargeable garden waste collection service for **ADDITIONAL** green wheeled bins?

	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely	No opinion
Annual charge of less than £45 for each additional green bin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual charge of £45 for each additional bin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annual charge of more than £45 for each additional bin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please say how much you would be prepared to pay

Signing up and Direct Debit

If the proposal to charge for collecting garden waste was brought in, we would want everyone who wanted the service to sign up online.

Our One Stop Shop would be able to help anyone who couldn't do this themselves.

If we started charging for the garden waste collection service would you be able to sign up online?

- Yes, I could do this myself
- Yes, someone I know could help me do this
- No, I would need help from the One Stop Shop (Please state what help you would need in the box below)
- No, I wouldn't subscribe if I had to sign up online

What help would you need?

Would you be able to set up an annual direct debit payment to pay for a chargeable garden waste service?

- Yes I could do this myself
- Yes, someone I know could help me
- No, I would need help from Bolton Council's One Stop Shop or my bank (Please state what help you would need in the box below)
- No, I don't have a current account

What help would you need?

Disposing of garden waste

What would you do with your garden waste if you didn't use our chargeable garden waste service?

- Compost / use wormery etc
- Take to household waste & recycling centre
- Ask neighbour if I could use their garden waste bin
- Use a private garden waste collection service
- Don't produce much / any garden waste
- Something else (Please use the box below to expand on your answer)

Please say what you'd do with your garden waste

Alternatives

What, if any, alternatives should we consider to help us make savings, instead of charging for collecting garden waste?

- Reduce frequency of street cleansing [litter picking and sweeping. Current frequency depends on area; Bolton town centre litter bins are emptied daily, while rural areas are emptied as needed].
- Reduce frequency of grass cutting [currently done every five weeks in the growing season]
- Reduce frequency of hedge cutting on council pavements / footpaths [currently done once a year from September to February, as weather permits].
- Reduce frequency of weed spraying (currently done twice a year in two cycles)
- Reduce environmental enforcement around litter droppers
- Reduce environmental enforcement around fly tipping
- Reduce environmental enforcement around dog fouling
- Reduce environmental enforcement around urinating in public
- Reduce environmental enforcement around abandoned vehicles
- Reduce environmental enforcement around commercial waste
- Reduce environmental enforcement around graffiti
- Empty burgundy bins less often [used for glass, cans and plastic bottles, currently emptied fortnightly]
- Increase Council Tax for everyone
- Something else (Please use the box below to expand on your answer)
- No alternatives to charging for garden waste collection
- No opinion

What other alternatives should we consider for Environmental Services?

Impact

How would you be affected if the proposal to start charging for collecting garden waste goes ahead?

- Financially - I would have to pay but think it's right to be charged to have my garden waste collected
- Financially - can afford to pay but would prefer not to
- Financially - would pay but it would be a struggle
- Financially - couldn't afford to pay
- Would dispose of garden waste in another way / composting, etc
- Another way (Please use the box below to expand on your answer)
- I wouldn't be affected
- No opinion

Please tell us how else you'd be affected

Overall views

How strongly do you agree / disagree, that in order for the Council to continue to provide frontline services such as street cleansing; litter picking; grass cutting; weed spraying; environmental enforcement; emptying litter bins, that an opt in chargeable garden waste collection service be implemented?

- Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No opinion

Please use this space if you'd like to add any additional comments about the proposal to introduce an annual charge for our garden waste collection service

- No comments

Your interest

Which of the following best describes you / your family's interest in this consultation?

- Live in Bolton borough [Bolton Council area]
- Work in Bolton borough
- Study / have children at school in Bolton borough
- Visitor to Bolton
- Official response from Parish / Bolton borough Councillor / Elected Member (Please complete the boxes below)
- Official response from a business / organisation / community group. You must have their permission to submit an official response on their behalf (Please complete the boxes below)
- None of the above - please explain below

Please say what your interest is

Please say which ward, business organisation or community group you represent

Please say what your role is - in what official capacity do you represent the ward, business, organisation or community group?

About you

Your answers in this section help us to make sure we are getting views from different types of people. They won't be used to contact or identify you.

Please give your full postcode

eg BL1 1RU

Are you...?

- Female
- Male
- Identify in another way

Which most closely describes you?

- Employed full time [30 hours or more a week]
- Employed part-time [up to 30 hours a week]
- Self employed / freelance
- Unemployed, available for work
- Unable to work because of sickness / disability
- Full time student
- At home, looking after family
- Retired
- Other - please explain below

If 'other' please explain

Which age group are you in?

- Under18
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 - 74
- 75 - 84
- 85 or over

Do you look after, or give any help of support to family members, friends, neighbours or others who need help because they have a long-term physical or mental ill-health / disability, or have problems relating to old age?

Please don't count anything you do as part of paid employment.

- No
- Yes, 1-19 hours a week
- Yes, 20 - 49 hours a week
- Yes, 50 or more hours a week

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term physical or mental health condition / illness?

- Yes, limited a lot
- Yes, limited a little
- No

What is your ethnic group?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White British | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British |
| <input type="radio"/> White other | <input type="radio"/> Black, Black British, Caribbean or African |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed or Multiple ethnic group | <input type="radio"/> Other ethnic group |

Which of the following best describes your financial situation?

This question helps us to see how people are being affected by the cost of living

- I often can't afford basic necessities [food, heating etc]
- I sometimes struggle to afford basic necessities
- I can afford basic necessities but have very little spare money
- I can afford basic necessities and have some spare money to spend on extras or save
- I'm comfortably off and have no money worries
- Don't know, as I don't have responsibility for managing finances

Which of these best describes the home you live in?

- Owned - outright without a mortgage / loan
- Owned - with a mortgage / loan
- Rented - from a housing association / social landlord eg Bolton at Home
- Rented - from a private landlord
- Live with parents, family or friends and pay them some rent
- Live rent-free with parents, family or friends
- Other

Please tell us more

What Council Tax band is your home in?

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- G
- H
- Not applicable
- Don't know

Bolton Council is proposing an annual charge for households that want their garden waste collected.



- Proposed charges would only apply to households that opt in
- Food waste collections would continue as current
- The council would save £1m per year



**Have your say at
bit.ly/Garden_Waste**

**Bolton
Council**

